Growth and Development Committee 2023 Report to the DSA National Convention

Respectfully submitted by Kristian Hernandez & Beth Huang

Introduction

The Growth and Development Committee was created in 2019, through the synthesis of two approved national Convention resolutions, with the goal to further develop the recruitment, retention, training, mentorship, chapter development, infrastructure, and socialist analysis necessary to **build the mass organization** the political moment calls for. All of the work done in this report would not have been possible without the diligent efforts of the entire GDC team, including our awesome DSA staff! The Growth & Development Committee is currently composed of a steering committee with various project subcommittees: a Chapter Survey team, a Training team, a New Member Orientation team, and the newly formed Matching Funds team.

The GDC is in the beginning stages of exploring a pilot program for an income based dues drive with Chicago DSA, who approved the effort at their most recent chapter convention. We will also be tabling at the National Convention and talking to members about building a strong and resilient organization. We're carrying out a member survey this fall, and we are in the final stages of the NPC approving matching funds for a number of DSA chapters across the country. We'll continue hosting new member orientations, texting lapsed and expiring members, and carrying out trainings to support and develop new and existing socialist organizers and chapter leaders.

We've been able to successfully support national bodies who reach out for help with trainings/member development, as we have done with the GNDCC (Green New Deal) and have discussed doing with other national bodies like the HJC (Housing Justice Commission). We are still working on capacity for the entire body - it's been difficult to recruit members with the experience to help train and develop others (especially who are not already working on other national bodies

and/or in chapter leadership), and we are making more efforts to reach out to members as they are leaving leadership roles or campaign roles and have more capacity to help with this work. Our restructuring, away from static committees and instead to more flexible and timebound projects gave the GDC a lot of freedom to focus only on work that was relevant and where there was engagement/interest.

Here's a short overview of our work over the last two years:

Chapter survey

- Completed our annual chapter survey this spring - see **full chapter survey report below on page 18**

Leadership Intensive

- Led a two-day leadership intensive weekend in June with current and incoming chapter leaders **attended by about 50 leaders from 30+ chapters**
- We will be following up with another run through September 22-24. You can read more about this project on page 4 and sign up at https://dsausa.us/LeadershipIntensive

Matching Funds

- Now housed under the GDC. The NPC approved guidance around certain political and admin questions, and the committee is now in the final stages of recommending chapters for matching funds subject to NPC approval.

Member renewal spokes

- We use Spoke to reach out to members with reminders to renew their dues, both for the actual month and in the month prior/after as needed.
- Between 2022-2023, **members and staff have sent 70,577 texts**.

Membership Drive

- February 2023 ahead of apportionment
- **Change in total members: 169; Change in MIGS: 282**

NMO's

- We continue to host new member orientations on a regular basis

Recommitment Drive

- We hit our goals by **recommitting 5,906 members and raising $174,525.50 in**

new dues income. All along the way, chapters built new practices, developed more capacity and new leaders, and grew their membership. You can read more about the drive on page 5.

Restructuring the GDC

- The Steering Committee approved this proposal (on page 86), which sought to support implementation of national priority campaigns at the chapter level. Two immediate projects that will come from this proposal include a Strategic Campaigns training series to support GND chapter leaders develop strategic campaigns and a Labor 101 training to support the development of labor working groups in chapters.

Trainings

- Over the last two years the GDC has completed **104 trainings**, on both the national and local level. Some of these trainings were collaborations with other national bodies (NLC, GND), our Kickstart your Chapter trainings for new and struggling chapters, as well as local level trainings that were often at the request of chapter leaders.

Again none of this work was carried out by any one person alone and we are grateful for all of these DSA members and staff for their passion and energy for growing a militant and effective organization: team members Andrew B, Dan B, Michaela B, Evan D, Matt H, Anthony L, Brennan L, Sam LH, Gillian M, Sean M, Stephen M, Michael O, Jessie R, Joshua R, Brandon Y; former and current steering committee members Sarah C, Colleen J, Shane K, Jorge M, Rashad X; current NPC members Gilman B, Justin C, Tefa G, Sydney G, Kara H, and Ashik S; DSA staff Emma B, Tom H, Glenn R, and Amy Z, our incoming GDC members, and anyone else we may have missed.

GDC Deeper Dive

Leadership Intensive

This project was carried out with the goal of helping support newly elected chapter leaders or members of chapters who are being developed to be leaders in upcoming elections. While many of the GDC trainings up to this point have been

somewhat introductory, this training series was created with the aim of delving deeper into what it means to be elected leader in DSA and the responsibilities of leadership in a political organization. The topics covered included: DSA Chapters: Structure & Purpose, Decision Making & Democracy, Engaging your membership, Communications, Differentiate between Engagement & Recruitment, Meeting & Event Planning, Administrative Resources, List Building & Organizing Tools, Intro to Campaigns, and National Communications & Resources.

The goals of the intensive are as follows:

1. Chapter leaders will understand the role of elected leadership in DSA.
2. Chapter leaders understand the importance of communications practices, how to engage with the media, and how to effectively administer both internal and external comms and differentiate between the two.
3. Chapter leaders understand the importance of setting expectations, having defined roles, and ensuring all responsibilities have clear ownership.
4. Chapter leaders will understand the importance of recordkeeping, written descriptions and guides for future leaders, and clear processes that are able to be communicated outside of the steering committee.
5. Chapter leaders will know the basic steps necessary to plan, facilitate, and follow up after meetings of all types (general, committee, working, etc.)
6. Chapter leaders will understand the difference between recruitment and engagement.
7. Chapter leaders understand what it means to grow chapter capacity and what it takes to bring people into the work and develop them into socialist organizers.
8. Chapter leaders will understand the basics of new member onboarding and ensuring that all members understand what DSA is, how to talk about DSA, and how to recruit others into our work.
9. Chapter leaders understand where to receive support for conflict and grievance related matters.
10. Democratic mandates and expectation to actually lead rather than refrain from having a position or making decisions
11. Chapter leaders understand their financial responsibilities and where to get help/resources

This two-day Leadership Intensive, held in June, will be brought back September 22-24. Our goal is to beat out the previous cohort number (50 DSA leaders) and reach chapters who haven't already participated.

March 2023 Membership Drive

The GDC undertook a membership drive initiative in coordinating with organizing staff to help chapters increase their membership numbers ahead of apportionment. This was particularly exciting for those chapters within reach of getting another delegate. Timing was a challenge (one month) , as well as a consistent and strong institutional practice of engaging with membership lists. Chapters struggle to recruit *new* members (most chapters don't maintain a list of nonmembers). Delegate counts were motivating to core but not to other membership.

- Change in total members: 169
- Change in MIGS: 282

2022 Recommitment Drive Report Back

The Recommitment Drive launched in late April 2022 with the goal of communicating the political importance of dues in a member led and member funded political organization, increasing member retention rates and engagement by organizing Chapters to take the lead in driving renewals so they would build capacity for the future, and connecting dues to local and National priority campaigns.

In this report you will find: a table of the decisions and votes that led to the Recommitment Drive; a series of recommendations based on the Drive's implementation; metrics and numbers from the Drive; and testimonials from participating chapters. The 2022 Recommitment Drive demonstrates the value of investing in infrastructure and skill building across DSA's membership, so that members and chapters can take the lead in implementing member engagement and retention programs at the chapter level. The Drive exceeded its goals of recommitting 5,000 DSA members with 5,906 recommits and $193,000 in dues commitments – $40,000 of which are monthly. The Drive successfully stabilized

DSA's membership numbers and reversed a downward trend in membership, but did not see chapter participation or integration with national priority committees and working groups at the scale needed to significantly grow DSA's membership. In order to build a healthy member led and member funded organization, this work must be integrated across the organization and be pushed forward on a regular and ongoing basis. To build the mass political organization we need, we must connect internal organizing that builds capacity to strategic outward facing work, and in doing so build mass multiracial working class power.

Why a Recommitment Drive?

Member dues provide a financial foundation for DSA's political independence. A member-funded organization does not rely on the grants and gifts that can influence non-profit organizations. Dues, instead, distribute funding over thousands of individuals and constitute a material commitment to DSA and the socialist project. Through their dues, DSA members own the organization. DSA's primary mechanism for maintaining dues is through renewal reminder emails, Spoke text messages, and direct mail sent from national headquarters each month. Some chapters complement these emails with their own communications, but overall, DSA lacks coordination in its engagement of lapsed members. As a result, thousands of members have joined DSA and not renewed their membership. Furthermore, as DSA develops power as an organization, it is critical that it has stable finances grounded in its membership so it can maintain its democratic socialist politics.

Democratic Mandate				
Aug '21	(R27) Beyond 100k: Building a Mass Socialist Organization	National Convention	Passes	*GDC will organize a Dues Drive that communicates the political importance of dues, increases our retention rates, connects renewal to local and National priority campaigns, and develops chapter fundraising capacity. DSA will allocate staff resources necessary to improve the membership management functionality on the website*

Oct '21	Dues Drive Proposal	NPC	Passes	Loomio Vote
Feb '22	Priority Proposal through August 2022	NPC	Passes	Discussion: *Until Aug 22 DSA staff should treat (1) recommitment drive as top priority for growth and which weaves in our labor, GND and electoral work. (2) Electoral primaries. (3) Hiring the labor staffer to begin that component of the DSLC work plan.*
May '22	Vote to Extend Drive by One Month	NPC SC	Passes	*It's taking extra time to get chapters engaged. With this extra time we can get more chapters signed up and figure out how to get the priority committees more involved. There is precedent for an extension as it was done during the 2020 Recruitment Drive.*

Phases of the Drive

Early 2021

- GDC Retention Subcommittee tests some phonebank software calling YDSA members

Summer/Fall 2021

- Convention Vote
- NPC Vote
- Listening Phase: outreach to prior 100k (2020 recruitment drive) captains, chapters w/ member engagement teams

January 2022

- Convened Recommitment Drive Core Team
- Finalized planning timeline and set Drive metrics and goals

February 2022

- NPC Vote
- Published application for, began building Recommitment Drive Teams
- Developed RD teamwork plans
- Began brainstorming training needs and developing curriculum

- Began chapter outreach announcing drive
- Published chapter point submission form
- Began outreach to Priority Committees to integrate priority work into the Recommitment Drive

March 2022

- Created Recommitment Drive Chapter Toolkit
- Onboarded team members to Communications, Organizing & Outreach, Tech & Infrastructure, and Trainings teams
- Chapter Officers Info Call
- Coaches begin contacting, working with chapters to confirm chapter point people
- NPC approves Recommitment Drive fundraising for Matching Funds for Offices

April 2022

- Held Training Session #1: Identifying Members to Recommit
- Held Training Session #2: Asking Members to Recommit
- Hosted Recommitment Drive Launch Call
- Launched Member Testimonials and #DuesRock
- Organizing & Outreach team open office hours for chapters
- Chapter Phonebanking begins

May 2022

- At-Large Phonebanking begins
- Second round of trainings
- Began announcing Weekly Chapter Winners
- Discussion and decision to extend Drive, Vote by NPC Steering Committee

June 2022

- At-Large Phonebanking continues
- Chapter Phonebanks continue
- Drive closes on June 30th
- Chapter winners announced

<u>Recommendations to the NPC</u>

- **Articulating Points of Unity:** The NPC must set aside time to present a political motivation based on points of political unity for projects which are necessary for organizational sustainability and financial health.
- **Facilitating Integration with National Priorities:** The NPC must organize other parts of the national organization to prioritize integrating their projects into national campaigns to grow or renew membership, including from a narrative place but also concretely setting goals and allocating time resources to meet those goals.
- **NPC Leadership & Engagement:** The NPC must participate in planning and discuss challenges early on (including the timing of dues drives which require engagement across the organization to ensure large chapter and priority committee engagement).
- **Prioritizing Retention & Recruitment:** The NPC should take proactive steps now and permanently to ensure members and leaders understand that recruitment and retention are central to our work, not an afterthought nor a separate project from their other work. Moreover, in a member-led organization, it's our collective work to retain, recruit, and develop our membership.

Lessons for the Future

Foundational and Ongoing Work

As socialists, we believe in mass organization. And the greatest lesson from the Recommitment Drive is that it is within our power to constantly and consistently build our capacity by focusing on member retention, but we must do so at scale as an organization. By holding consistent practices around member retention and engagement, we build our capacity to do the kind of meaningful political work that sparks hope and grows mass movements. The biggest question coming out of the Recommitment Drive is how we will continue this work in a constant and consistent way. Mass politics begins with millions and member engagement practices can help to build basic organizing muscles across DSA's membership.

National and Priority Committee Engagement

Member renewal/dues drives must be directly connected to a strong, clear, and powerful political vision and work. DSA is a political organization. People engage

with political organizations as members when they see and understand the way their membership contributes to a broader strategy that they have a role in. Without elected political leadership communicating a clear and unified strategy *and* engaging in meaningful work to execute that strategy, dues drives fall flat. The Recommitment Drive aimed to integrate with priority committees but struggled to do so effectively, which negatively impacted the Drive's momentum.

Chapter Participation

101 chapters committed to participating in the Recommitment Drive; 62 chapters used the national Scale to Win dialer to phonebank; and 16 chapters participated in Spoke textbanking. Chapters were slow to get moving on engaging in the Drive, though engagement picked up significantly in the latter half of the Drive. Many large and medium chapters chose not to participate in the Drive because they felt they were at capacity with electoral or other strategic campaign work. In the future the timing of dues drives should be carefully considered (particularly in relation to electoral cycles), but ultimately we must find ways for member retention work and strategic campaigns to reinforce one another, rather than compete.

- Chapters in the South and small chapters were consistently top performers both in week-to-week and overall Recommitment Drive engagement and outcomes. For example, the 3 chapters with the highest increases in members in good standing by the end of the Drive were all Southern chapters[1]. This met another goal outlined in R27, the 2021 Convention Resolution drafted by GDC members: the intentional mentorship of chapters in the South and chapters that (currently) have smaller memberships.
- For participating chapters, the Recommitment Drive reinforced how regular organizing practices were vital for developing already active members' skills and increasing overall member retention and engagement. Many chapters that participated shared they were interested in building regular, evergreen outreach and retention practices locally.
- The perception that the Recruitment Drive was separate or detached from chapters' already-existing campaigns and work was a bigger hurdle to engagement than we anticipated. Often through conversations with

[1] Pensacola (FL), Birmingham (AL), and Triangle (NC) were the chapters with the greatest increases in members in good standing at the end of the drive. Chapters were broken into 3 groups based on membership size at the start of the drive: <100 members, 101-500, and 501+.

members we were able to help clarify that the RD work was the other side of the same coin as external campaigns, and a clear way to bring more people into the work, but there were likely many chapters who didn't participate in part because of this perception. This continues to be a key area to address as we continue to build a member-driven organization.

- We underestimated the time it would take chapters to decide to engage in the Drive and begin moving work forward. Although the idea of having a Drive period was in part to build a sense of shared purpose and momentum across the org, it may have limited some chapters from participating. In the future, it may be worth exploring giving chapters the option to choose their own Drive period and timeline, as some chapters felt they could not manage this work during the period the RD ran. This would also depend on GDC/Drive team capacity.
- The RD used a point person model for engagement, where chapters had to identify a point person or core team who would carry the work of the Drive forward and serve as the main point of contact for progress. Relying on this meant that if chapters didn't fill out the form, the Drive team had no way of knowing whether/how they were engaged in the Drive, and didn't receive crucial communication about resources and support available. It's worth exploring other models of engagement for future campaigns.

Outreach and Organizing Team / Chapter Coaches

- At the start of the Drive, 26 member volunteers were identified to help with chapter outreach and organizing as RD chapter coaches. As with any campaign, there was drop off in coach capacity, and also many coaches who did great work and developed new/strengthened leadership skills.
- We found that engaged coaches tended to have a clear, positive effect on chapter RD engagement. Chapters that came to the weekly coaching office hours or were otherwise in regular contact with a coach tended to successfully carry out the work of the Drive. This reinforces the importance of building relationships across our organization, and also some of the challenges, as it could be difficult to reach or connect with chapters.
- The O&O team aimed to create many opportunities for chapters to connect with resources and have support in completing crucial steps of the Drive. We suspect that the logistics of coordinating the national phonebanks via a

request form sent to staff may have been a barrier for chapters to organize their calls. Office hours with coaches were a place where we walked RD Point people through filling out the form if they needed. Similarly, our national at large phonebanks were a place chapters could receive phonebank training and support as well as community while calling through their own lists. These resources weren't heavily utilized, but were helpful for the chapters who did use them. If planning resources like this in the future, it's worth weighing the tradeoffs of energy and labor needed to organize these resources with how often they're used by the intended audience. This also speaks to the slow, long term and necessary nature of outreach and working to build relationships across the organization.

Trainings

Chapters attended trainings focused on:

- Mining for Asks - identifying opportunities and roles for new and existing members to engage with at the chapter level
- Reading Your Membership list - review of DSA's membership categories and how to identify expiring and lapsing members by reading your chapter membership list
- Making the Hard Ask - practicing how to have a structured organizing conversation and make a hard financial ask
    - Given many chapters joined the Drive later in the timeline, it may have helped to run a third round of trainings to support that group.
    - Still, this was somewhat anticipated and we created short videos as a resource for chapters.
    - The Drive team also created a robust chapter toolkit to support chapters. For future toolkits, we recommend having a brief guide at the top of the toolkit and then more detailed information following - a lot of key information was hard for some chapters to find given the way we structured it.

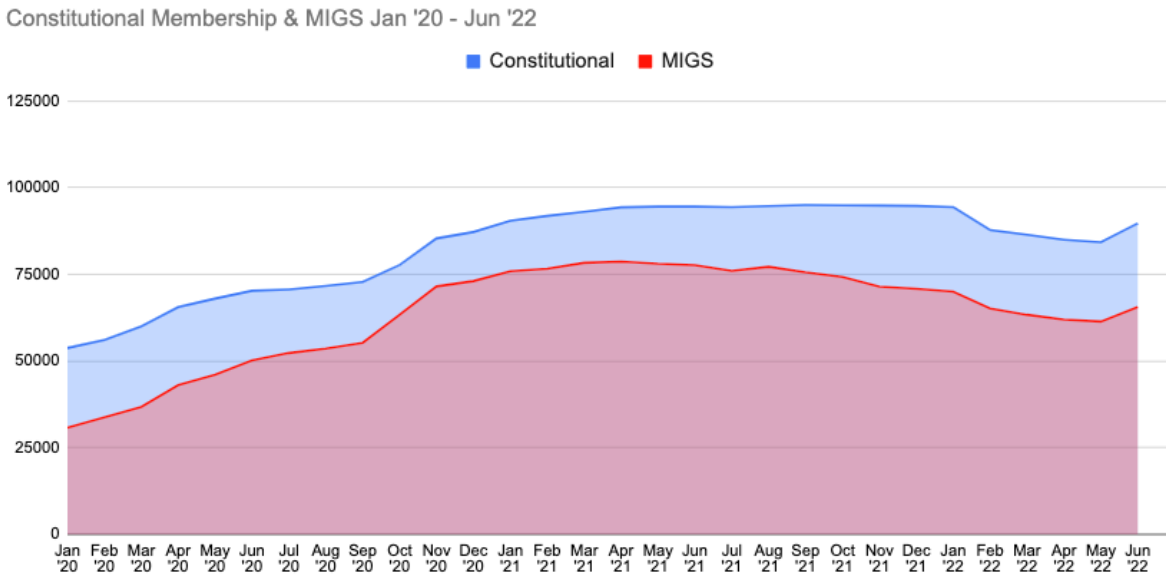
Infrastructure

One of the major accomplishments of the Recommitment Drive is the infrastructure that was created to support a distributed model of member to member organizing in DSA. Multiple chapters shared that using a dialer for internal organizing was something they had never done before and found to be extremely useful.

- Org Tools developed and oversaw the rollout of a national call and text program for the Recommitment Drive
- 31,612 total calls; 2,730 voicemails; and 2,810 texts were made
- Through national phonebanks organized by the Growth and Development Committee, 7,984 calls to at-large members were made during the Drive.
- The platform's voicemail drop (leaving automatic voicemails to landlines when calling) feature was approved for nation-wide use
    - Those who phonebanked, either in their chapters or with national at-large calls, found using the dialer helped them reach a group of members who may not be as responsive to email or text-only communication. Many at-large members we phonebanked were especially grateful for the 1-on-1 outreach and connection.

<u>Recommits by the Numbers</u>

Reversing a Downward Membership Trend: While the Recommitment Drive did not happen at a scale that significantly grew DSA's membership, it did contribute to reversing a downward trend in membership numbers. May and June 2022 represent the first months of positive growth in membership over the past year.



Keeping DSA Members in Good Standing: DSA's Constitutional Membership is made up of Members in Good Standing (last dues payment in the past year) and Expired Members (last dues payment more than a year ago but less than 2 years

ago). The graph below shows the ratio of expired members (the percent of DSA's Constitutional Membership that are not Members in Good Standing) from January 2020 to June 2022. **The ratio of expired members is found by dividing the number of expired members by the total Constitutional Membership. When the expired ratio trends down it means DSA's membership is healthier– more Constitutional Members are Members in Good Standing and are up to date on dues. When the expired ratio goes up, it means a greater portion of the Constitutional membership are not up to date on dues and will soon lapse.** The objective of retention work is to lower the ratio of expired members by keeping as many DSA members in Good Standing as possible. During periods of growth, the expired ratio tends to go down because new joins add to the total number of Members in Good Standing. For example, starting in September '20 with the launch of the 100k Recruitment Drive, the expired ratio lowers because of the infusion of new members. But in September '21 (one year after those joins), the expired ratio begins to increase. This is because members need to renew their membership one year after their last dues payment in order to maintain their status as a Member in Good Standing – anyone who does not take action to renew their membership becomes an expired member and the ratio of expired members goes up. In May and June of 2022, the expired ratio begins to flatten and even lower (slightly) as the Recommitment Drive works to restore expired and lapsed members to Members in Good Standing and the organization sees an uptick in new member joins following the release of SCOTUS decisions in June.

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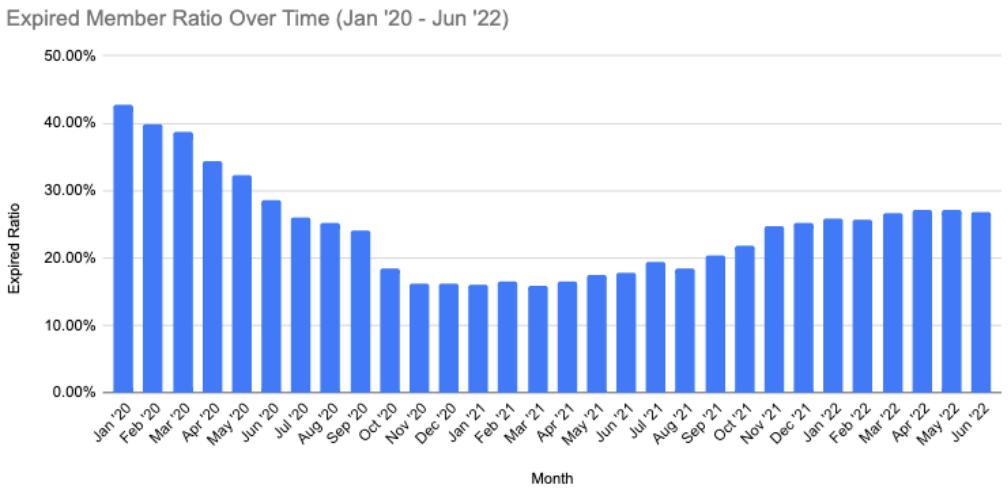
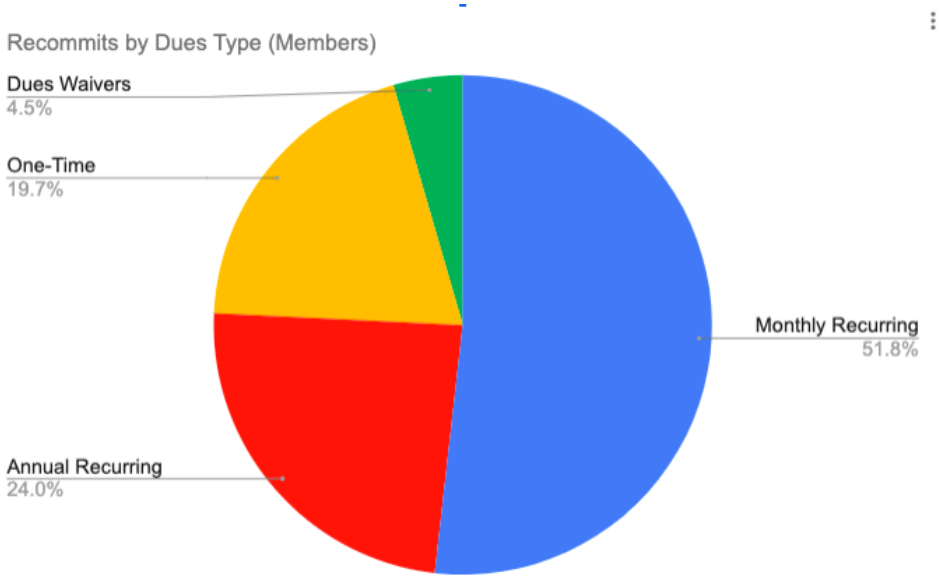
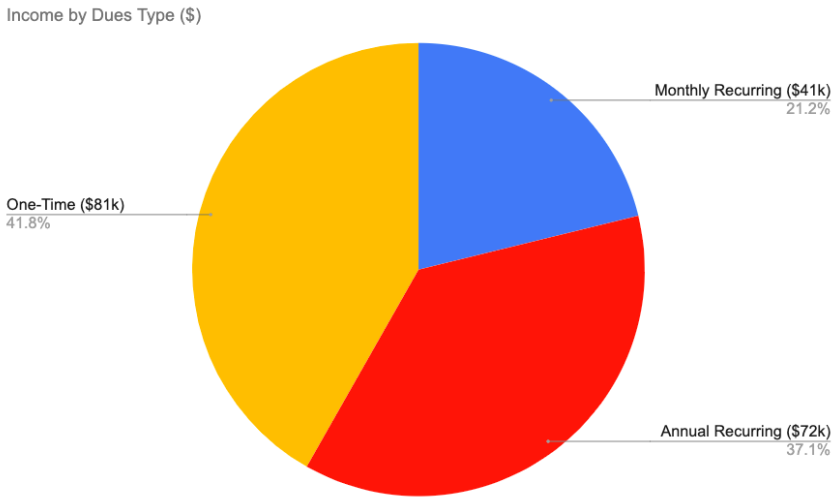


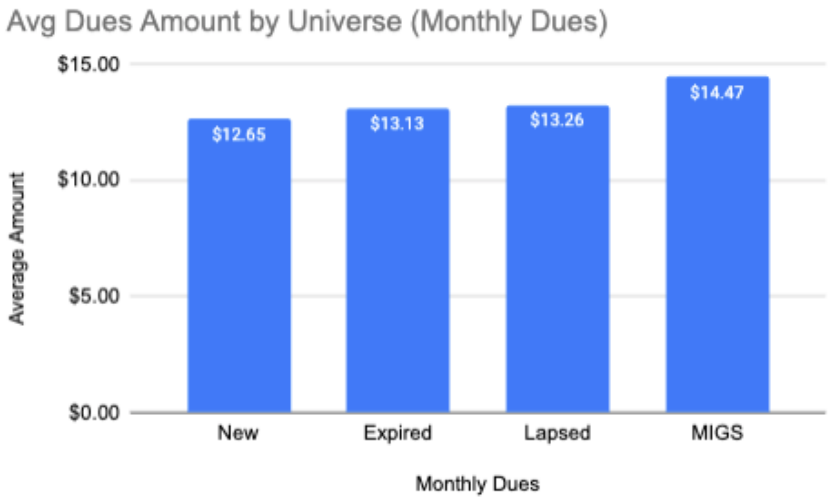
Total Recommits by Dues Type: Over the course of the Drive, 5,906 people took action to join or recommit to DSA. Of those people, the majority committed to recurring monthly dues (51%) and about a quarter of people committed to annual *recurring* dues (24%).

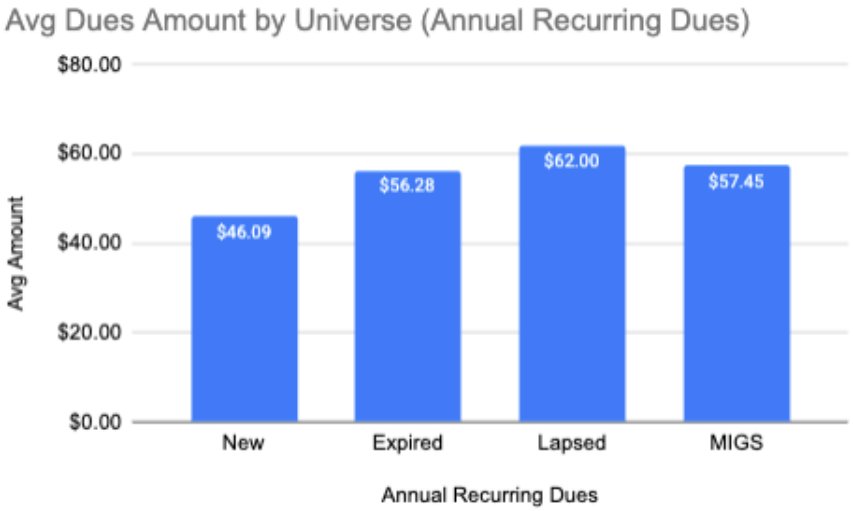


Total Income by Dues Type: In terms of dollars, the Drive brought in $81,035 in One-Time Dues, $71,876 in Annual Recurring Dues, and $41,074 in Monthly Dues commitments. Keep in mind that although monthly commitments appear to make up for the least amount of income, these payments will recur every month. So in just two months time, income from monthly dues commitments will outpace the total amount of funds raised through one-time dues during the Drive.

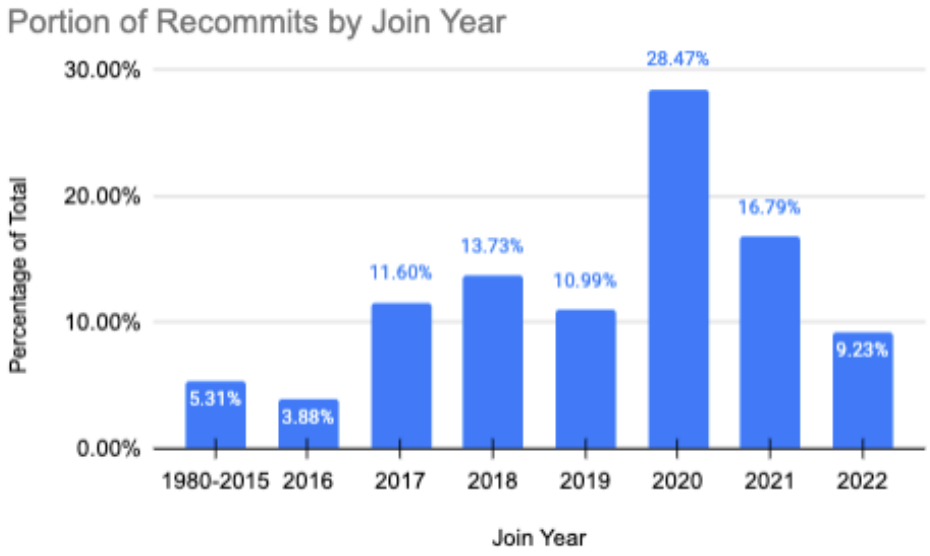


Average Dues Amounts by Membership Universe: By looking at the average dues payment by membership universe, we can see the value of asking members who have already made a commitment to DSA to consider renewing or increasing their dues. Members who recommit to paying dues or are already members in good standing are likely to be more engaged in the organization and are willing to increase their investment in our collective work, while new members start at a lower average rate.





Recommits by Year Joined: Of the people who recommitted to DSA during the Drive, over 94% of recommiting members initially joined DSA in 2016 or after. The largest group of people who recommitted during the Drive initially joined DSA in 2020 (28%). Given DSA's high member growth rate beginning in 2016, and the large number of members who joined in 2020 during the 100k Recruitment Drive, it makes sense that we see more recommits from these join years - there are more more members to reach out to, and in turn, more recommits.



What Chapters Had to Say

"Starting the Recommitment Drive felt daunting at first, until I realized we were reaching out to people who had already made the decision to join DSA! They had just gone inactive (or never gotten active) but they had signed up for a reason and thus we already had something in common. Phonebanking for the drive has helped Las Vegas DSA reconnect with these members and update them on the work we do in the community, almost everyone we've spoken to has recommitted to support us, with the majority choosing to sign up for monthly dues" - Las Vegas DSA

"Metro Cincinnati and NKY had their first phone bank for the Recommitment Drive last Thursday! It was very easy to use Scale to Win to call our list and we were able to get through a list of over 150 members in less than an hour with just five members making calls. It was an easy ask to get members who chose to recommit to commit to monthly dues instead of annual and we were also able to sign members up for our next event!" -Metro Cincinnati and North Kentucky DSA

"My time in the DSA has been one first after another: first time text banking, first time canvassing, and now, for the Recommit Drive, first time phone banking. To be honest I'd been avoiding it because I'm a bit of an anxious introvert and to be doubly honest, the experience was stressful and awkward at times, but if it weren't for the help of the comrades from National, I don't think I would

have ever even tried. Colleen and Amy spent a long zoom call on a Sunday morning helping me set up our chapter's call script, Walker got all our phone numbers ready to go, Emma and Jordan were patient and helpful during the phone banking zoom call itself. I don't know the percentage of successful calls an experienced organizer would want in order to consider this worth the time, but I consider me becoming better trained as an organizer a win. I consider my stretching outside my comfortable boundaries a win. But really, when I heard a familiar voice pick up the phone on my second call and had the opportunity for both of us to say we missed each other and the work we had done in the past, it was a reminder to me of how socialism is built on these relationships between people that care about people." - Fresno DSA

2023 DSA Chapter Survey Report

Drafted by the GDC Survey Subcommittee: Colleen J (Denver), Evan D (Columbus), Matthew H (Pittsburgh), Rashad X (Lakeshore IL)

Introduction

DSA is a mass socialist organization, the likes of which has not been seen in the US in a century. We have approximately 250 chapters and organizing committees (groups that are not yet formal chapters) across the country. While we are a national organization, each chapter has wide latitude to work on campaigns of their choosing and structure themselves as they see fit. Although we have many different moving parts facing heterogenous political terrain, we are all working together toward a socialist horizon, using a variety of tactics and strategies. Because there are no blueprints for success and we are trying to build the plane as we fly it, it is important to learn what is working and why to share best practices, learn what is not working to troubleshoot or readjust, and get a holistic view of the basic unit of the organization. In 2020, our Growth and Development Committee launched a chapter survey to learn more about how our chapters are structured, how they function, and where we have areas for growth and development. This year, as we launched our fourth annual chapter survey, our questions have been refined to reflect a focus on chapters' internal organizing efforts to recruit and retain members, as well as their external-facing work, such as campaigns. We asked chapter leadership to complete the survey as a team to ensure a thorough understanding of the work and structure of the chapter would be reflected in their answers. We received responses from 111 of our 244 chapters and organizing

committees so our response rate is about 45% of **all** chapters and OCs in our org. Out of these chapters and organizing committees, 197 are currently active, which we used as our N. We received responses from 111 chapters and organizing committees—a 56% response rate for all **active** chapters—representing 41 states and DC. So while this survey is not a complete picture it does showcase a significant portion of our chapters, including our largest ones. The survey was first emailed to chapters on April 4th. Further outreach was done by staff via regional leadership calls and Spoke texting to chapter leaders, and targeted follow-ups were done by the GDC via email, texting, and the GDC's 100k Twitter account. The initial deadline to complete the survey was May 1st, but we extended it to May 14th in order to get a higher response rate. We provided an incentive for chapters by entering each one that completed it into a raffle for DSA swag (flag, banner, and megaphones).

DSA by the Numbers

- **Number of Constitutional Members:** 77,575 Constitutional Members with 57,982 MIGS and 19,593 Expired members.

Table A. Constitutional Membership

Year (Dec)	Constitutional Membership
2015	6,200
2016	11,000
2017	32,000
2018	55,000
2019	56,000
2020	87,000
2021	95,000
2022	83,000
2023	78,000

- **Number of YDSA Chapters:** 126
- **Number of DSA Members in Office:** 207 (including locally endorsed electeds)

    - **Current Nationally Endorsed DSA Candidates in Office:** 52
    - **Current National Win Rate:** 59% in primaries/ 79% in general elections
    - *(2023 numbers won't be finalized until the general in November)*
- **Number of Staff:** 32 full time, 1 part time1 intern (34 total)
- **2022 Recommitment Drive:**
    - Number of Members who recommitted: 5,906
    - Number of Dues Commitments Raised: $193,000
    - Number of Calls Made: 32,000
- **Number of Members Recommitted w/ the 2023 Convention Membership Drive:** 328
- **Number of GDC Trainings Completed from 2021-June 2023:** 104
- **Number of Renewal Texts Sent in 2022 by GDC members and staff:** 52,586
- **Number of Renewal Texts Sent in 2023 by GDC Members and Staff:** 17,991

Responding Chapter Demographics

We grouped the chapters according to three categories of current size. Small chapters are chapters with 1-100 members; Medium chapters have 101-500 members, and large chapters have over 500 members. Our overall response rate was only about 50% of all current chapters and OCs. With the participating group of chapters, there was some underrepresentation from small chapters and slight overrepresentation of medium and large chapters, compared to the total number of all DSA chapters. However, it's important to keep in mind that the selection effect of whether chapters participated in the survey or not may relate to important differences about chapters. That is to say, chapters that participated in the survey have a good chance of being different from the chapters that didn't, in terms of things like organizing capacity, so **we should be cautious about generalizing to all of DSA from these responses**.

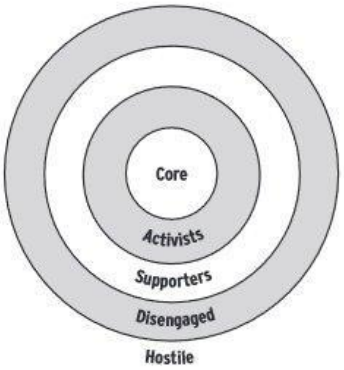
Table 1. Chapter Size Groups Represented in the Survey vs. All Chapters

Chapter Size Group	% All Chapters	% Survey Participating Chapters
Small (1-100 members)	50	39
Medium (101-500 members)	38	44
Large (>500 members)	12	17

Note: percentages rounded to nearest whole percent

Chapter Growth & Retention

First we will take a look at chapter membership. Every chapter has three layers of people who contribute to the ongoing work of the chapter: **Core**, Active, and Supporters.



A chapter's **Core** is made up of members that are elected leaders of the chapter or of working groups/committees, members with a lot of experience and crucial to the ongoing work of the chapter. The majority of our surveyed chapters have a core of between 1-10 people.

Table 2. Core Members by Chapter Size

Core Members	Small Chapters	Medium Chapters	Large Chapters	Total Chapters
1-10	37	23	2	62
11-30	6	25	7	38
31-50	0	1	5	6
More than 51	0	0	5	5

Active members include core members along with the people who semi-regularly participate in the work of the chapter, not only as event attendees. Nearly half of chapters surveyed have between 1 and 20 active members, including about 34% of medium-sized chapters surveyed, and 84% of responding chapters have between 1 and 50 active members.

Table 3. Active Members by Chapter Size

Active Members	Small Chapters	Medium Chapters	Large Chapters	Total Chapters
1-20	37	17	0	54
21-50	6	28	5	39
51-100	0	4	7	11
More than 100	0	0	7	7

Supporters are members (and non-members) who might occasionally show up to events/meetings and like/share your chapter's social media posts, and who are part of your mailing/membership list, but probably have never done anything besides maybe attending one event or scattered online engagement.

Table 4. Supporters by Chapter Size

Supporters	Small Chapters	Medium Chapters	Large Chapters	Total Chapters
1-20	9	5	0	14
21-50	21	14	1	36
51-100	9	18	3	30
More than 100	4	12	15	31

Email lists are an even broader category than supporters, reflecting a large swath of people who have expressed interest in a chapter's activities in some way. The chapter mailing list sizes from our survey range from 15 to 35,000, and the median size is 590.

Table 5. Mailing Lists/Listservs

Number of Subscribers	Number of Chapters
Less than 200	29
200-999	42
1,000-5,000	31
More than 5,000	9

Typically held on a monthly basis, general meetings are a staple activity for chapters to conduct ongoing business, deliberate political positions, and determine priorities. 49 chapters surveyed have between 1-15 members currently attending their chapter-wide meetings, followed by 39 chapters with 16-30 people.

Table 6. Meeting Attendance

Average General Meeting Attendance	Number of Chapters
1-15	49
16-30	39
31-75	19
76-99	2
100-199	2

Key Takeaways

Our survey results show a very large difference between supporters and active members. This is, to some extent, inevitable in a mass membership organization with low barriers to entry like DSA and is not necessarily a bad thing. However, chapters should always be striving to move people deeper into the bullseye to build their capacity and grow new leaders and organizers. Chapters with disproportionately high layers of Core and Active members should be consulted to determine what is working for them and if they have resources or insights to share.

Recruitment

Recruitment Methods

Chapters were asked whether they have used any of six methods to grow their outreach list and reach out to people not already connected with DSA in the past year.

Tactics that target an already-built audience such as public events or other allied organizations were very widespread across chapters, while more individualized

and proactive outreach tactics of canvassing and Action Network petitions were much less common. Most chapters used a variety of tactics, with the median chapter utilizing three of these six. No individual method was correlated with success in recruitment, though the total number of methods did have a moderate correlation, as chapters that utilized a large variety of methods on average brought in more new members than those that used fewer. Although some information, like how frequently chapters practiced these methods, was not included in the survey, this suggests that chapters using a diversity of outreach tactics are more successful at bringing in new members than chapters who do just one single tactic.

Table 7: Number of Chapters Using Each Method to Grow Lists

Method	# of Chapters
Tabling at Public Events/Crowd Canvassing	80
Door to Door Canvassing	31
Using Action Network Tactics like Petitions and Letter Writing Campaigns	39
QR Code/Interest Form Link on Flyers at Events	69
Sharing an Interest Form on Social Media	60
Invite other Allied Organizations to Events	79

Next, we asked chapters about which methods they have used to make direct asks of non-members to join DSA. Once again, we see that chapters have adopted many approaches, with the median chapter using four of these seven tactics. Most chapters indicate that they make asks of people already engaged through chapter meetings, campaigns, and public events. The most commonly used method was including a join link on the chapter website, a passive tactic that relies on people seeking out DSA and making an independent decision to join. Active community-focused tactics such as public tabling and asking campaign volunteers to join were also fairly common, which can both serve to expand DSA's reach into different communities and build relationships with potential coalition partners.

As we continue to adjust to the post-Bernie era, chapters will need to continue and expand investments in proactive strategic recruitment efforts in order to maintain and expand DSA's mass membership.

Table 8: Number of Chapters Using Each Method to Make Direct Asks

Method	# of Chapters
During campaigns and projects, we ask people who aren't yet in DSA to join	60
We complete 1:1s with non-members who have been active in our campaigns and projects	40
We make membership/dues asks at chapter meetings	54
We ask people to join DSA via public tabling/outreach events	60
We use our mailing list to specifically target non-members and remind them to join	21
We have links to join DSA on our chapter website	90
We post on social media about joining DSA	60

Finally we asked who in the chapter is responsible for recruitment work. In most chapters, this was the Steering Committee, though many of these chapters also reported that it was administered in an ad-hoc fashion. Only five chapters that responded to the survey are currently not doing any recruitment work. Each of the chapters not currently engaging in recruitment had fewer than 100 members and 1-10 core members.

That the share of chapters where a single member handled recruitment was fairly low and the vast majority assign recruitment to a formal committee or the Steering Committee indicates to us that chapters understand it to be a collective responsibility and an important organizational priority. Of the 16 chapters that asked for GDC assistance with recruitment, only 2 reported that they currently have no one handling this work. We believe that these responses show an overall high desire to engage in this work and a widespread commitment to growing the organization.

Table 9: Who Does Recruitment Work in Chapters

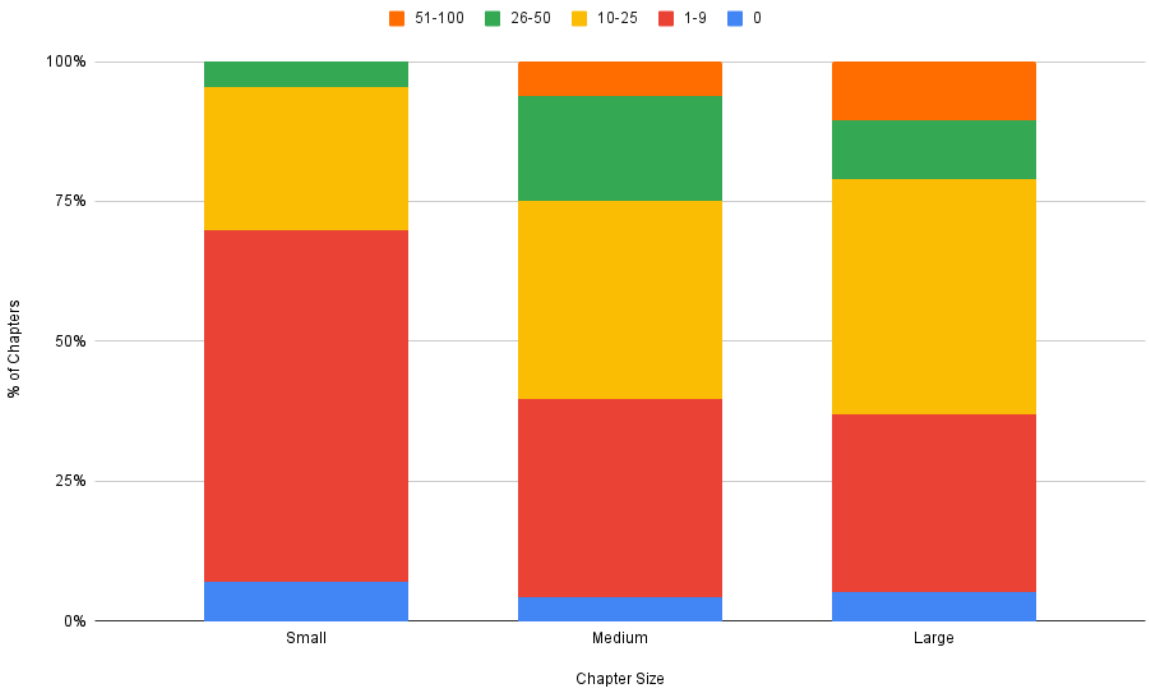
Method	# of Chapters
Steering Committee	67
Formal Committee	37
Single designated member	14
Ad hoc (no formal committee)	45
No one in our chapter currently does this work	5
We would like more resources from the GDC on this	16

Recruitment Totals

We asked chapters to estimate the number of members they recruited in the past year. As we would expect, larger chapters tended to recruit more members. The bulk of small chapters (1-100 members) recruited fewer than 10 members while the average medium (101-500), and large (500+) chapters recruited between 10 and 25. Many small chapters were successful in recruiting a sizable amount of new members relative to their current size, as the roughly 30% of small chapters who report recruiting 10 or more members each grew their membership by more than 10%. Chapters with a larger total number of “active” members tended to do more recruiting, with “core” and “supporter” group sizes having a similar but weaker effect on recruitment outcomes.

Of the 57 surveyed chapters with an active membership of 50 or more people, none reported zero recruitment. Smaller chapters tended to recruit more new members proportional to their total membership. Total chapter size was correlated with recruitment outcomes though not as strongly as active membership was. While 50 active members represents only 10% of a large chapter, it makes up fully half of a small chapter, and we observe that smaller chapters tend to be able to punch above their weight. This illustrates to us the necessity of continually investing in key capacities like onboarding and retention to enable a strong recruitment program and effective mass organizing, and to connect with chapters that are reporting very successful recruitment to learn from their success.

Graph 10: Number of Members Intentionally Recruited by Chapters



Our recommended next steps are:

- Connect chapters to GDC resources on intentional recruitment and member development
- Support chapters in developing intentional recruitment strategies and programs, and the onboarding and retention work that both enables and capitalizes on recruitment
- Reach out to smaller chapters — which have shown outsized potential for growth through recruitment — to bring more experienced recruiters into the GDC and expand our capacity to help (currently) smaller chapters reach this potential
- Connect with chapters that have above average recruitment rates to understand what they're doing, what's working for them, and share with other chapters

New Member Onboarding

What happens when people decide to join DSA and show up on your membership list? Any new member onboarding program might include some combination of 1:1

outreach, an orientation meeting, and similar practices. We asked chapters to describe their current onboarding practices from the following categories.

1. **Self-selecting:** new members are presented with onboarding activities and must choose to pursue them
2. **Onboarding without follow-up:** chapter intentionally engages new members via one time orientation events or one time calls. After that, there is no targeted outreach to engage them as new members.
3. **Onboarding WITH follow-up**: chapter intentionally engages new members at least once and has a built in mechanism for following up with them (e.g. 1:1s set up after an onboarding/orientation meeting, mentorship program, etc)

Most chapters surveyed (79 chapters) do some kind of new member onboarding, and another twelve chapters have this in development. Twenty chapters surveyed do not currently have any onboarding practices and are not currently developing any practices.

Graph 11. Chapter Onboarding Methods

The members who carry out this work (if applicable) vary a great deal. Approximately 36% of chapters surveyed have some sort of formal committee

dedicated to member onboarding (i.e. Membership, Internal Organizing, or Mobilizer Committee). The percentages add up to greater than 100% because chapters could select multiple answers.

Table 12. Who Does Member Onboarding?

Formal Committee	36%
Steering Committee	36%
Single Designated Member	23%
Ad Hoc	24%
No one	13%

Our recommended next steps are:

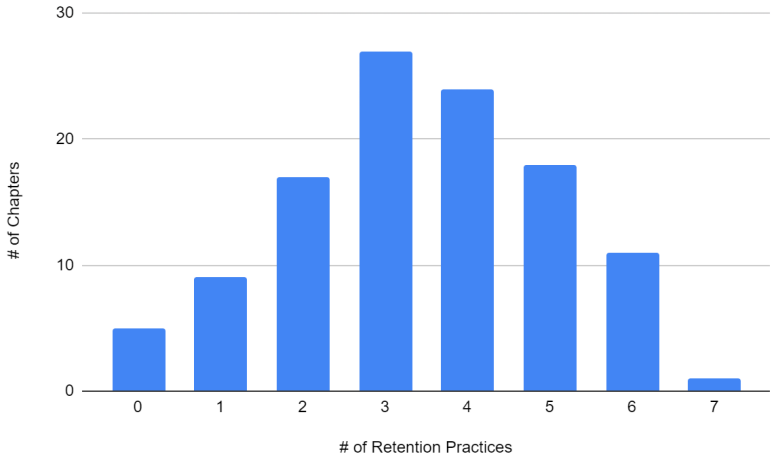
- Connect with chapters requesting support on new member onboarding
- Continue collecting and building out resources from chapters
- Continue with the GDC project of supporting chapters with building out member onboarding committees and structures

Retention

Retention Methods

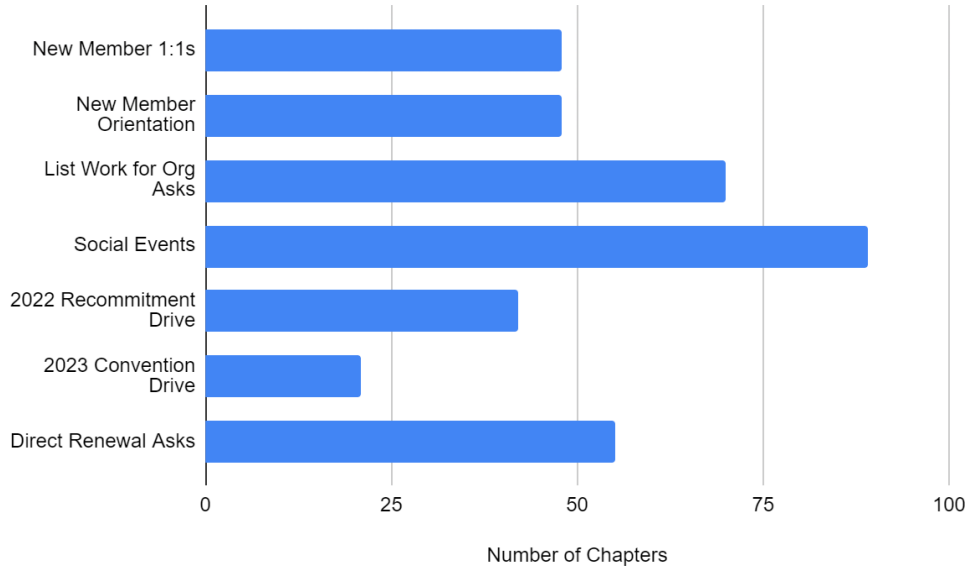
Chapters were asked about the membership retention practices they carried out in the past year. Given a list of seven different retention practices, chapters were asked to check if they'd done them in the past year. Almost all chapters are doing some kind of retention work, and a small minority, only 5 chapters of the 111 surveyed, reported not doing any retention work in the past year. Most chapters reported doing many types of retention practices in the past year.

Graph 13. Number of Retention Practices Chapters did in Past Year



Next, we look at the specific retention organizing practices done in the past year. Graph 14 below shows that most participating chapters planned at least one social event in the past year. About two-thirds of participating chapters (70 chapters) also did list work for various organizing asks in the past year. Only about 44% of participating chapters (48 chapters) did 1-on-1 calls or meetings with new members when they join or held a new member orientation in their chapter. A little over a third of participating chapters (42 chapters) engaged in the summer 2022 Recommitment Drive, and about 1 in 5 surveyed chapters participated in the more recent 2023 Convention Membership Drive. Still, half of chapters surveyed (55 chapters) said they made direct renewal asks to members who lapsed, suggesting some chapters are doing retention drive work outside of the supports and drives organized through DSA National.

Graph 14. Number of Chapters that did Specific Retention Practices in Past Year



This data provides a helpful snapshot, but we don't know how regular or consistent these practices are. Making direct asks to members to renew their membership is great, for example, and it is even better when this is done regularly and consistently.

It is a huge organizing accomplishment when chapters are carrying out this type of work. We see many chapters are building strong foundations in retention organizing, and we celebrate that. Also, with only about half of all chapters responding to this survey, this suggests many chapters in our organization may not be doing this type of work. The chapters that are successful in practicing robust and regular retention practices can help provide resources, insight, and best practices for how to build these programs at the local level, especially as chapters scale up these practices in their own contexts.

Retention Totals

We asked chapters how many members they estimated they retained in the past year.

Table 15a. Chapters' Self-Reported Retained/Renewed Members in Last Year

	0 Members	1-9 Members	10-24 Members	25-49 Members	50-99 Members	100-199 Members	200+ Members
Number	9	51	22	14	2	0	3

The most common response was chapters reported retaining 1-9 members, followed by 10-24 members. Nine medium chapters reported retaining 25-49 members, as did 5 large chapters.. Three large chapters of over 500 members reported retaining 200 or more members in the past year. And 9 chapters, which included small, medium, and a large chapter, reported retaining no members.

Table 15b. Self-Reported Retained Members in Last Year by Chapter Size

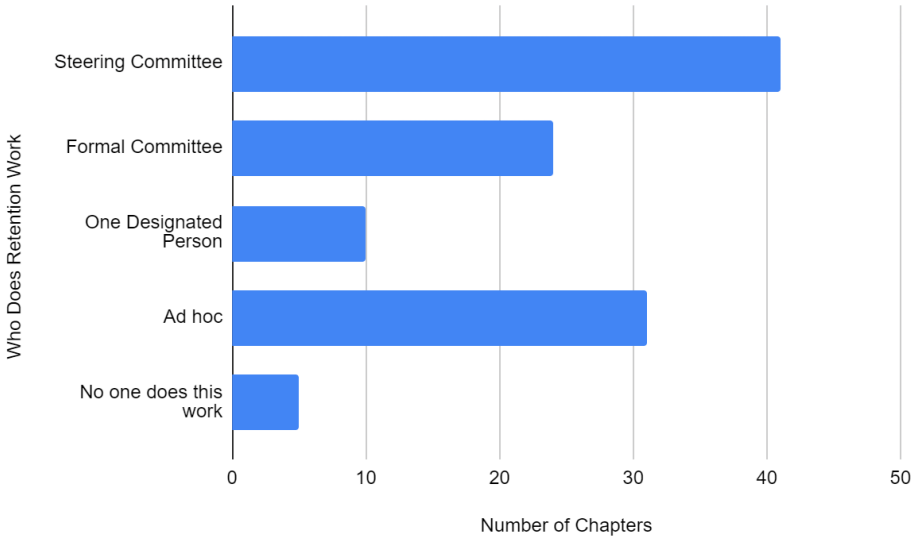
Estimated Retained Members	Small Chapters	Medium Chapters	Large Chapters
0	5	3	1
1-9	28	21	2
10-24	9	16	7
25-49	0	9	5
50-99	1	0	1
100-199	0	0	0
200+	0	0	3

As you may have noticed, there may be some reliability issues with this data. There may have been a mistake in filling out the survey, or we may have an incredibly successful small chapter of 100 members that retained 50-99% of their membership in the past year. We did not ask for more information about how chapters calculated these numbers (for example, do chapters track the outcomes of the retention practices they do) and so we don't know how confident chapters are in these estimates. This type of data collection, although requiring more labor, would be incredibly helpful for us in future studies, especially with determining which types of practices were most effective at retaining members. Still, we can follow up with chapters that are reporting above average retention rates to see what practices and lessons we can learn from their success.

Retaining members is a crucial first step in building sustainable organizations. Although DSA has benefited greatly from passive recruitment in the past, it is key that all chapters transition into more active recruitment and intentional retention practices. The GDC offers a range of resources—guides, trainings, new member orientation slides, access to free phone- and text-banking software, coaching—to support chapters in developing this work.

Finally, we asked who is doing retention work in their chapters.

Graph 16. Who Doing Retention Work in Chapters



Results from this question show that, of the 111 chapters who responded to the survey, most chapters do not have a designated member retention committee or role. Many chapters' steering committees are doing this work on top of other responsibilities, or the work is done on an ad hoc basis. This suggests that most chapters do not yet have the capacity to to have regular and consistent retention work, and this may also help explain the reported retention numbers.

The GDC is working to develop more resources to support chapters in building committees to hold this work at the chapter level. The GDC offers several trainings on general member engagement, and several resource guides and tools for retention drives are available to chapters looking to explore this work.

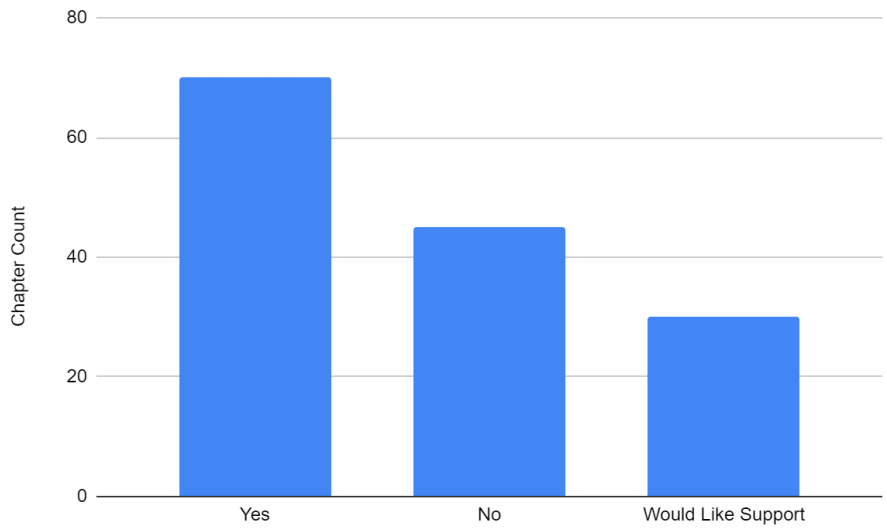
Our recommended next steps take several prongs.

- Outreach chapters that have been developing this work successfully in their chapters, and recruit their point people to join the GDC and share insights and resources
- Connect chapters seeking more support to the many resources the GDC offers
- Support chapters in developing regular, sustaining retention practices, for we know the more consistently this work is done, the more effective it is.
- Explore in future studies the efficacy of certain retention practices, and the efficacy of consistent practices

Mapping Membership

We asked chapters whether they mapped their membership. For chapters that were, we asked what characteristics chapters collected information on.

Graph 17. Chapters Mapping Membership

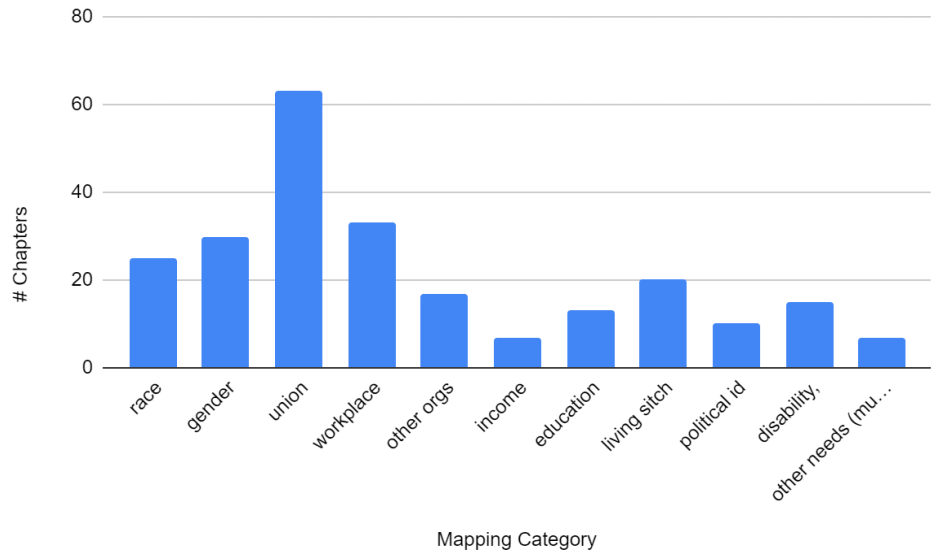


Chapters could select more than one of the categories above (and some selected responses indicating yes and no)

Of the chapters that said they were mapping, the most common answer (62/111 chapters) was members' union affiliations. The second most common answer (32 chapters) was members' workplaces. The next most common categories to map

were members' gender (29 chapters), race (24 chapters), and living situation -- did they rent, own a home, etc -- (19 chapters).

Graph 18. Chapters Mapping Members' Info by Topic



In organizing, the data that we have is an important resource in helping us win campaigns and identify allied communities. Much like how Jane McAlevey describes "whole worker organizing" as a strategy in the labor movement, **we can build deeply effective organizing campaigns by connecting to many aspects of peoples' lives and communities.** This can also apply to the work we do in DSA. We recommend that the GDC connect with relevant national bodies and working groups, such as the Multiracial Organizing Committee (MROC) and the National Labor Commission (NLC) to build a comprehensive resource for chapters on how to effectively map membership and apply that data to campaigns and other organizing work.

One thing the survey team should consider including in future surveys is asking whether chapters map membership based on skills, and how they use those results to build teams to do various work in their chapter.

Accessibility & Accommodation

Next we asked chapters if they had any accessibility or accommodation practices in their chapters.

Table 19. Do Chapters Have Accessibility/Accommodation Practices

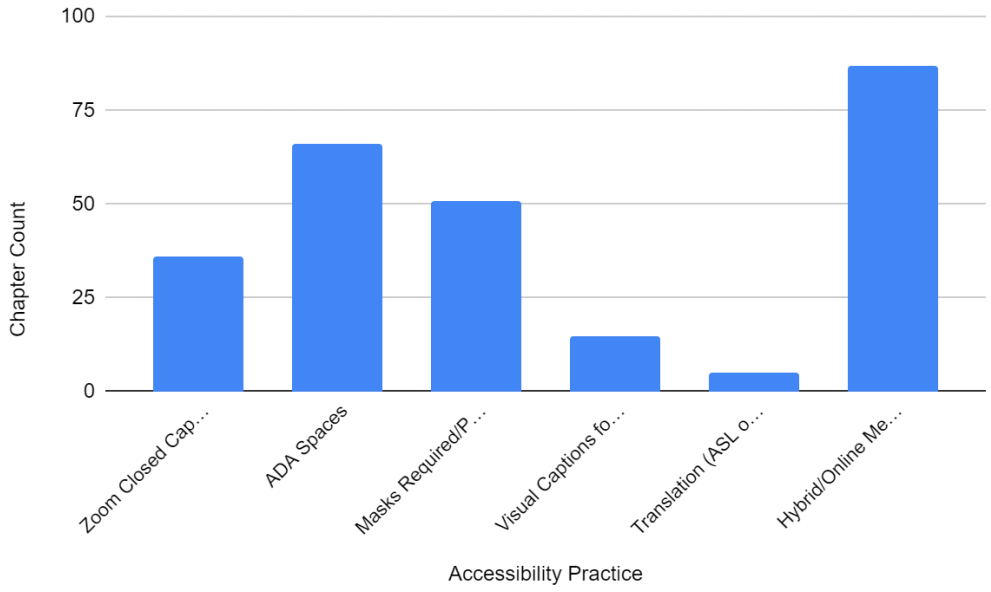
Accessibility Practice?	Chapter Count
Have 1 or more Accessibility Practice	108
No Current Accessibility Practices	5
Would Like More Info / Support	45

Most chapters surveyed have at least one accommodation or accessibility practice, and about half of all chapters surveyed requested more resources. Only 5 of 111 chapters surveyed stated they did not currently have any accessibility or accommodation practices.

Table 20. Chapter Accessibility / Accommodation Practices

Accessibility Practice	Chapter Count
Zoom Closed Captioning	36
ADA Spaces	66
Masks Required/Provided Indoors	51
Hybrid/Online Meetings	87
Visual Captions for Social Media	15
Translation (ASL or other)	5

Graph 21. Chapter Accessibility / Accommodation Practices



Most of the chapters surveyed (87) hold hybrid or fully online meetings, and just over half (66) hold meetings and events in spaces that are ADA accessible. Just under half of chapters surveyed (51) said they require and/or provide masks at in person meetings, and about a third of chapters surveyed (36) also use captioning with online events on platforms like Zoom. Only about 13% of surveyed chapters (15) include visual captions for social media posts or other communications, and 4% of chapters (5) provide translation (this included ASL or languages that were not English). One chapter also included a comment that they have created a formal accessibility working group that is working on developing best practices and exploring how to have air filters at in-person chapter events.

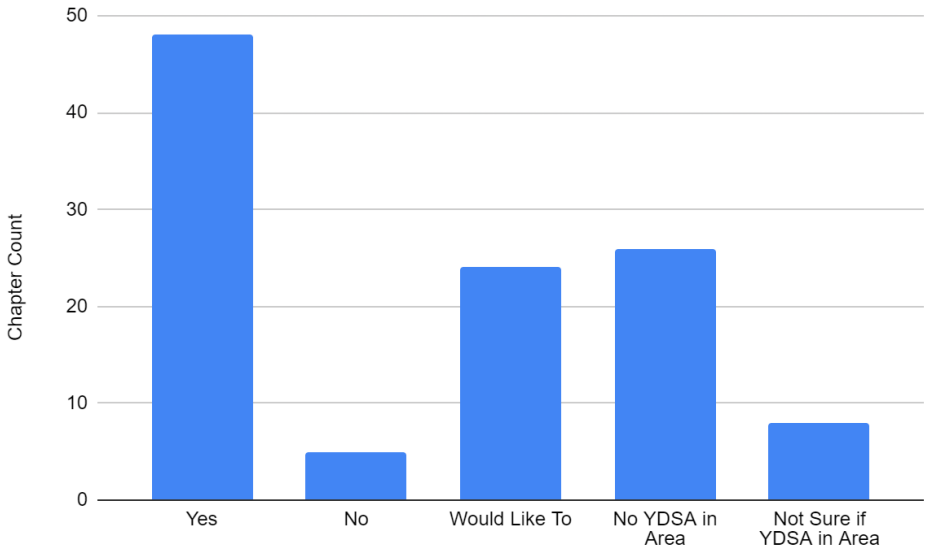
Ensuring our organizational spaces and practices are accessible to all is key to building a mass movement that is representative of the whole working class. While the state has sunset the practices and infrastructure related to the COVID-19 pandemic, we know the virus is still active and the transition to individualized risk and protection means our shared practices and guidelines are more important than ever. Many chapters have maintained practices developed in the past few years to ensure the health and safety of all members in an ongoing pandemic. Still, more can be done to strengthen these practices, and accessibility was an important consideration prior to the pandemic. Some resources, like captioning on

Zoom calls, are currently readily available to chapters through national DSA and OrgTools. We recommend creating a guide with best practices in collaboration with national bodies like the Disability Working Group and chapters already actively doing this work, and sharing with chapters.

YDSA

We asked chapters whether they worked with YDSA chapters in their area.

Graph 22. Chapters Working with YDSA Chapters



Most of the chapters surveyed are either working with YDSA chapters or would like to. Only 4% of surveyed chapters said they are not working with YDSA chapters. Unfortunately, the survey data cannot explain why this is. Similarly, we don't know what the collaborations between YDSA and DSA chapters look like in practice.

Supporting the development of our youngest generation of socialist organizers is a crucial task. One important next step from this section is working to connect YDSA chapters to DSA chapters if and when they are in the same area. We can also gather best practices from YDSA leaders and the point people that chapters shared

in the survey to develop best practices on how DSA and YDSA chapters can work together.

Recruitment & Retention Open-Ended Questions

Internal Organizing Challenges in Past Year

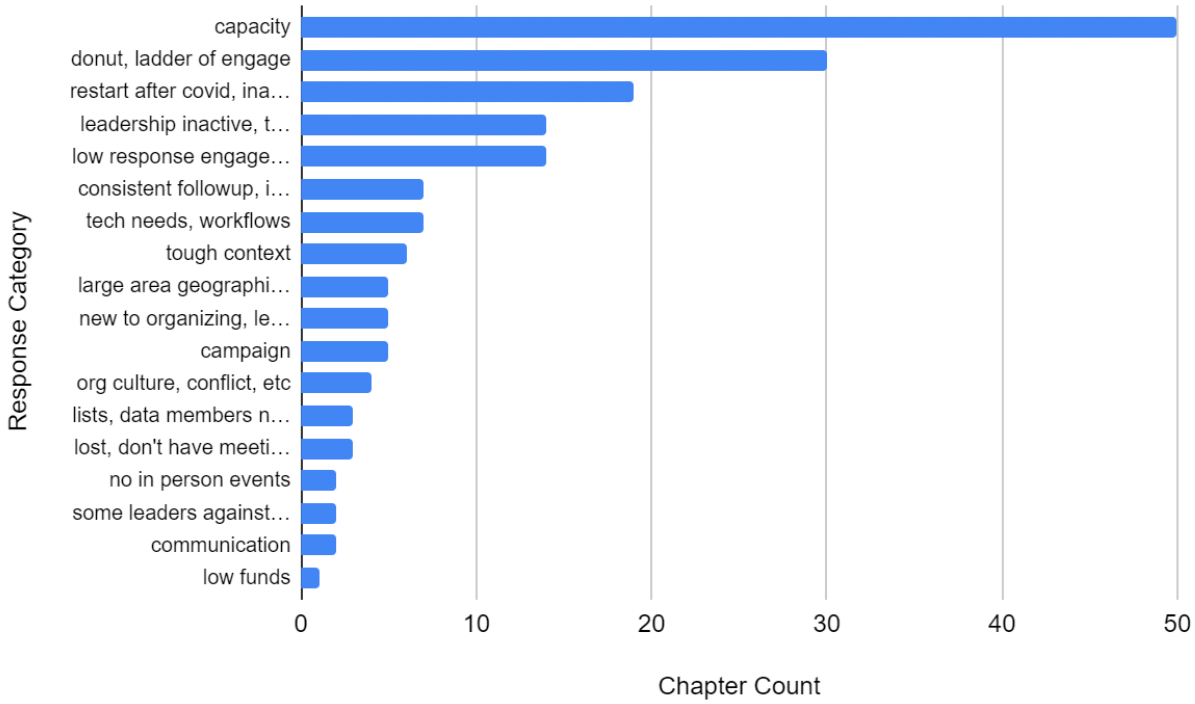
At the end of this section, chapters were given the opportunity to give longform answers to several questions related to their internal chapter organizing, or member recruitment, retention, and engagement. When asked about their biggest internal organizing challenges in the past year, 74 of the chapters surveyed (67%) gave a response to this open ended question. Responses were read many times and coded into different types of categories. Categories are not mutually exclusive, and all responses received at least one category code.

Table 23. Chapter Internal Organizing Challenges in Past Year

Response Category	Count Chapters
Capacity	50
Donut, Ladder of Engagement, Concrete Asks	30
Restarting after COVID, Inactivity, Demobilization, Burnout	19
Leadership Challenges: Inactive, Turnover, or Lack of Transition to New Group	14
Low Response, Engagement from Membership	14
Don't Have Consistent Follow up, Int Org Structures	7
Tech Needs, Workflows (Don't Spoke, Updating Lists Takes Time, etc)	7
Tough or Hostile Organizing Context (high Trump support, etc)	6
Large Area Geographically for Chapter	5
New to Organizing, Learning Curve	5
Campaigns - Challenge Balancing with Internal Organizing	5

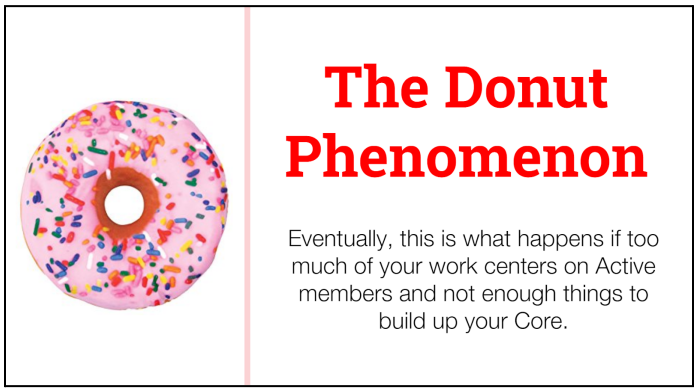
Conflict within Chapter, Difficult Individuals to Work With, Culture	4
Lists, Data, Members not Updating Info	3
Lost or Don't Have Meeting Space	3
Not Holding in Person Events	2
Communication & Coordination between Leaders	2
Some Elected Leaders Opposed to Organizing Practices	2
Low, No Funds	1

Graph 24. Chapter Internal Organizing Challenges in Past Year



Far and away the biggest challenge chapters experienced in the past year had to do with limited capacity. Fifty chapters shared capacity as an issue, either from having a currently small core that was stretched thin, or the 'capacity cycle' issue where, as one small chapter put it "we didn't have enough capacity to recruit to gain more capacity". Capacity was also noted by chapters of all sizes.

Another common challenge that thirty chapters named had to do with the donut issue, or too much work and responsibility resting on a small core of committed members.


The Donut Phenomenon
Eventually, this is what happens if too much of your work centers on Active members and not enough things to build up your Core.

Some of this related to not having clear asks for newer members, either in terms of internal organizing work or other campaigns or projects to plug into. Some chapters named the need to develop these asks explicitly, while some just noted the fact of work resting with just a small group. Balancing the work of external campaigns was a theme within this. Interestingly, different chapters had opposing takeaways. For some chapters, not having an external campaign for new members to plug into led to a lack of engagement and retention. Conversely, some chapters said their energy and attention to external campaigns meant they didn't have capacity to focus on internal organizing tasks. Better integrating internal and external work, rather than seeing them as opposing poles, is key. Building internal organizing structures can help develop leadership, and external campaigns can integrate recruitment and retention practices into their already existing work.

> The Steering Committee holds a lot of work and needs to increase capacity by engaging in list work to delegate more of the work(...) leadership not accustomed to delegating any of their work and gets discouraged by the lack of volunteers -Small Chapter

Nineteen chapters noted difficulties of rebuilding or gaining momentum in the wake of demobilization of the last few years related to COVID, general burnout, and, for several chapters, environmental disasters and severe weather related events worsened by climate change.

> It has been difficult to get the capacity we need in order to grow our capacity, and there have been definite strains at times. Also general demobilization from *waves hands in all general directions* -Medium Sized Chapter

Fourteen chapters noted issues specifically with leadership, such as general turnover or general inactivity from those taking on key responsibilities. A few chapters noted a lack of a strong leadership transition, where new leaders weren't able to gain the institutional knowledge and practices that previous leaders had built, leaving them to start again from scratch. Fourteen chapters noted a general lack of engagement or response from chapter members. When they would reach out to members about events, they would receive few responses. Part of this comes with the terrain of making asks in any context, and it is unclear from responses how frequently outreach was attempted, but it is worth studying and sharing best practices for member engagement. Also, several chapters noted issues with data, especially when members would move or change their contact information but not update their information with national or the chapter, making it difficult to effectively outreach current members.

Seven chapters noted the need for more consistent internal organizing structures. They may intermittently reach out to members, for example, but not on a consistent basis. Another seven chapters noted the need to better streamline their data workflows, like uploading member info into their list program, or needing to take advantage of some of the tools National makes available to chapters like Spoke texting. Five small and medium chapters noted challenges related to trying to organize members spread across a large geographic region. Some didn't have a central location where members could easily come together in person. Virtual meetings have become a consistent practice, but given the importance of gathering in person to build relationships, connect, and build momentum, this is a unique aspect to organizing for some chapters that deserves more attention and gathering best practices from chapters successfully navigating this.

Similarly, six chapters of all sizes noted some difficulties with organizing under tough or even hostile circumstances, such as being in an area with a high density of Trump supporters. A small group of chapters noted some other issues. Three chapters noted conflict in the chapter turning people away, three chapters noted

not having or losing a physical meeting space, two chapters noted elected leaders being opposed to doing internal organizing practices.

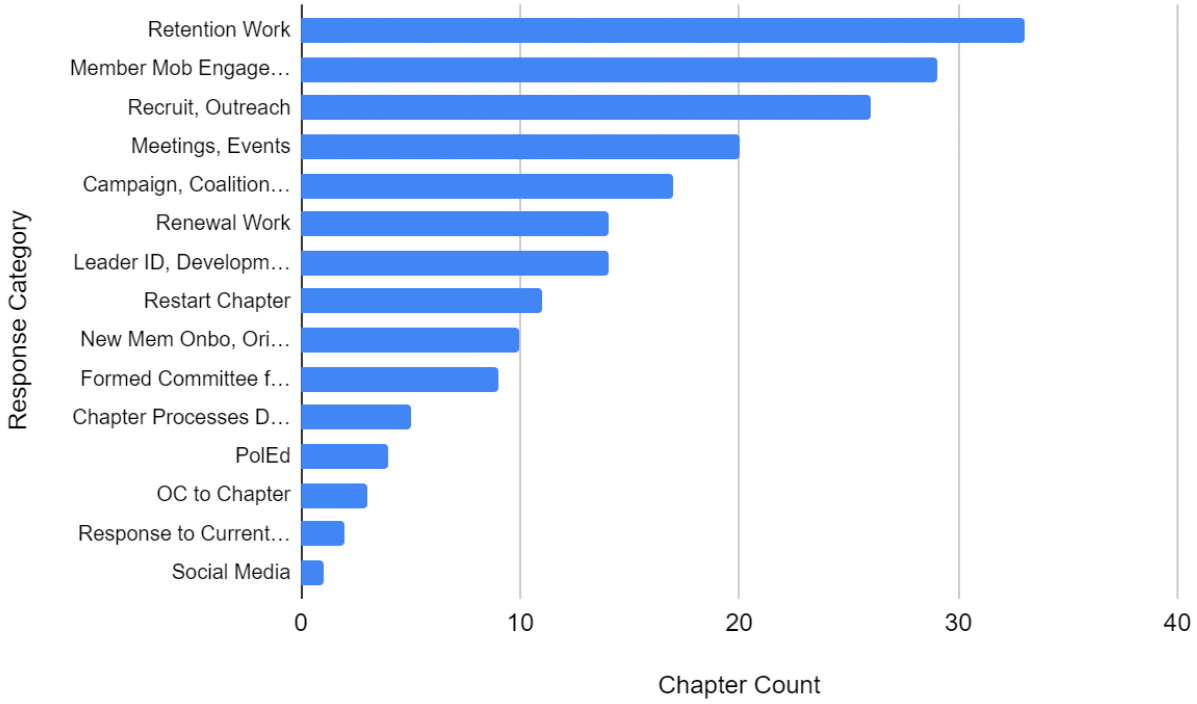
Internal Organizing Successes in the Past Year

When asked about their biggest successes in this area in the past year, 66 of the chapters surveyed (59%) gave a response to this open ended question. Note that categories are not mutually exclusive.

Table 25. Chapter Internal Organizing Successes in Past Year

Response Category	Chapter Count
General Retention Work	33
Member Mobilization, Engagement	29
Recruitment & New Outreach	26
Improved or Consistent Meetings and Events	20
Campaign, Coalition Work	17
Renewal Work	14
New Leader Identification & Development	14
Restarting Chapter after Inactivity/Latency	11
New Member Onboarding / Orientation	10
Formed Committee for Internal Organizing / Member Retention & Engagement / New Member Work	9
Chapter Process for Priorities, Improving Democratic Processes	5
Political Education	4
OC to Chapter	3
Chapter Response to Current Event	2
Social Media	1

Graph 26. Chapter Internal Organizing Successes in Past Year



Many chapters that participated in the survey are actively building and expanding their internal organizing work. Thirty-three chapters described successes connected generally to retention work. Twenty-nine described building member mobilization and engagement practices like consistent text and phone bank outreach to members about chapter events, or mobilizing members to engage in campaign or coalition work. Twenty-six chapters described building up intentional recruitment and prospective member outreach practices through tabling, calling email subscribers who weren't yet members, or holding specific events like public movie nights with the goal of bringing in new members.

> We were able to grow and retain members so that the majority of our steering committee was made up of new members. -Small Chapter

> Our internal organizing committee, "Community Committee" is a new priority as of this past year's Annual Chapter meeting and they are killing it! We've reinvigorated the internal organizing program, scaffolded out other subcommittees to handle internal organizing work, and already held two NMOs. Through new member orientation and outreach we have not only onboarded lots of new members but have identified and brought in folks with specific skills who are taking on more responsibility and stepping up as leaders. -Medium Chapter

> We are developing greater infrastructure for engaging the chapter and onboarding new members. We're also beginning listwork in earnest and developing our committees and working groups so that they can be successful and we can develop members into leaders. -Small Chapter

> We have consistently hosted DSA 101 new/prospective member orientation events every month since early 2022. We hosted a membership recommitment drive targeting lapsed members and brought back over 400 of them over 6 weeks at the end of 2022. We have developed a robust socials program including game nights, film nights, a soccer league, and self defense courses which draw prospective members with an "easy" entry into the organization. We now send regular emails to lapsed members encouraging them to renew dues. -Large Chapter

Fourteen chapters talked about doing intentional member renewal work. One small chapter described sending postcards to those in their chapter without phone numbers whose memberships were about to expire, and another chapter intentionally integrated membership renewal asks into their chapter convention programming. Several chapters participated in the 2022 Recommitment Drive or this February's Convention Drive, which often helped jumpstart new retention practices they've integrated into their chapter.

Twenty chapters described the importance of improving event practices, including holding in-person events when possible. Multiple chapters described the importance of holding general meetings at a consistent, set cadence each month, while others described adding new programming like a political education night or regular social event that helped boost member engagement and retention.

Fourteen chapters described successes in identifying and developing new leaders in their chapter. Nine chapters described building an internal organizing or membership engagement and retention committee which organized things like new member orientations, or did consistent outreach work to members. Ten chapters specifically described building new member orientation events or other systematic new member onboarding practices in their chapters. Eleven chapters described their success as rebuilding after a period of dormancy, either due to membership burnout, covid, or other factors. Four chapters described the boost to member engagement that came from developing a political education program,

like one large chapter that recruits new members through a public pol-ed walking tour in their city.

Three chapters successfully transitioned from organizing committee status into full chapter status, an important internal organizing milestone.

It is heartening to see so many chapters finding momentum and success in their internal organizing work and chapter development, especially after the past few years of a global pandemic and ongoing crises - economic, environmental, and otherwise - impacted chapters' capacity to stay connected and engaged. Although in some ways the answer is simple - capacity is built through intentional recruitment, member engagement through campaigns and other meaningful work, and regular retention practices - what chapters have shared demonstrates that there is flexibility, regardless of current chapter size, in building up these muscles. The GDC intends to follow up with chapters to get more insight into their practices and creative approaches to this work, to gather resources and lessons from chapters, and to identify new leaders to help build resources and trainings to share.

Internal Organizing for the Year Ahead

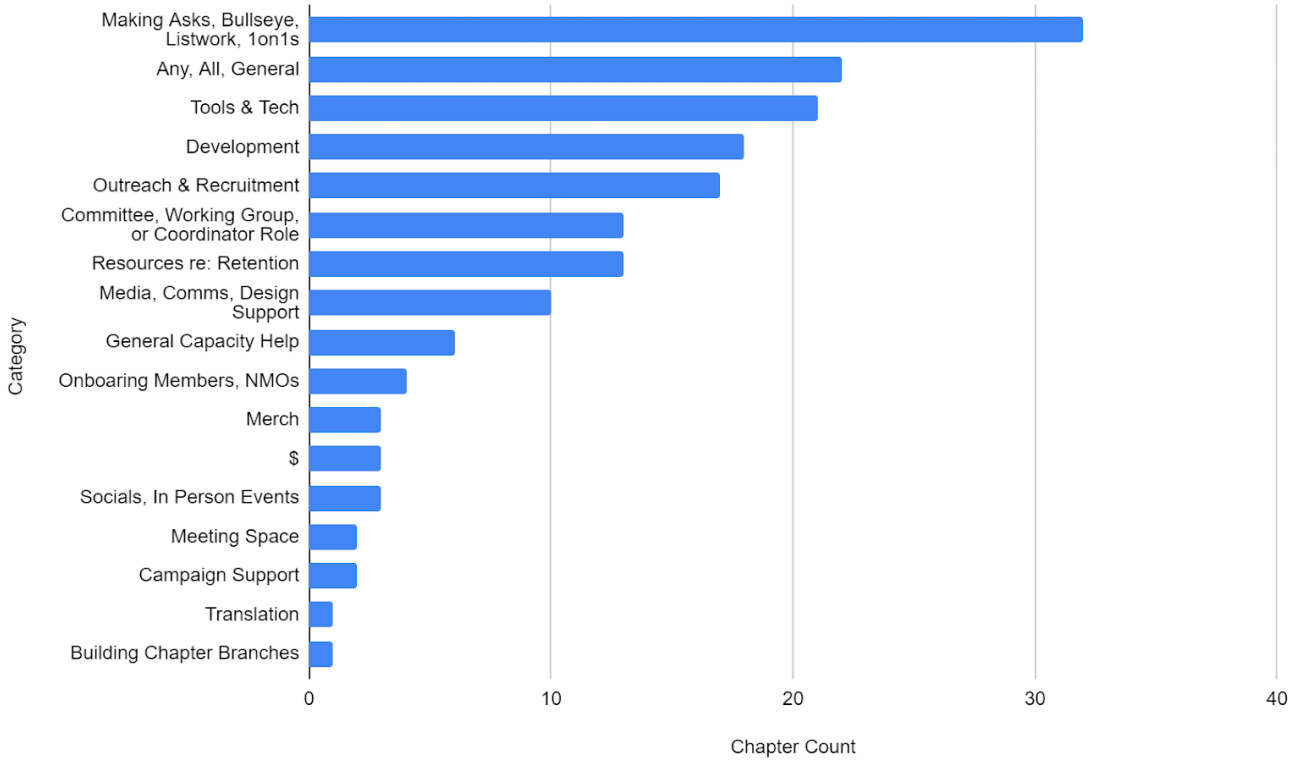
Chapters were also asked to think about the year ahead and share what resources, supports, or needs they anticipate needing to make their internal organizing work more successful.

Table 27. Chapter Internal Organizing Needs for Year Ahead

Category	Chapter Count
Making Asks, Bullseye, Listwork, 1on1s	32
Any, All, General Internal Organizing Resources	21
Tools & Tech	21
Resources re: Development	18
Resources re: Outreach & Recruitment	17
Creating a Committee, Working Group, or Coordinator Role	13

Resources re: Retention	13
Media, Comms, Design Support	10
General Capacity Help	6
Onboaring Members, NMOs	4
Merch	3
Money, Funds	3
Socials, In Person Events	3
Meeting Space	2
Campaign Support	2
Translation	1
Building Chapter Branches	1

Graph 28. Chapter Internal Organizing Needs for Year Ahead



Some great news is that many needs identified by chapters for the year ahead already exist through the work of field organizers, national tools and resources, and the Growth and Development Committee. The biggest need, shared by thirty-two chapters, is for support and resources on engaging membership, making direct asks, listwork, developing a bigger core, and 1-on-1 organizing conversations. Similarly, eighteen chapters named wanting resources related to chapter and leader development. Twenty-one chapters shared they could use any or all resources related to internal organizing, or just spoke generally about a need for resources.

Another twenty-one chapters shared wanting more support and resources related to tech tools like ActionNetwork. Org Tools, supported by national staff, offer training and guides on how to use Spoke, ActionNetwork, and Scale to Win. Similarly, the GDC often incorporates guides on using these tools, and offers them for free for various retention drives. Seventeen chapters specifically sought resources related to outreach and new member recruitment. Four chapters specifically named member onboarding and creating a new member orientation program, which the GDC offers resources and training on.

Thirteen chapters spoke of wanting to create either a committee or working group designated for internal organizing, or creating a specific leadership role that would coordinate this work in their chapter. The GDC is developing a program to support this in chapters, including holding a self organized time breakout session at the 2023 Convention. Thirteen chapters requested resources related to general retention efforts.

A relatively common need from chapters was for more communications support. This included running social media accounts, effectively targeting emails for engagement, and support and resources for graphic design. This is something that the national communications committee and the GDC could help shape and share with chapters. Other national bodies and chapters could also greatly contribute templates, resources, and ideas to be shared in a central location. One takeaway from this survey is that, despite attempts at outreach and communication, many chapters still aren't aware of the resources and support available to them through the GDC, field organizers, and other national bodies. A major next step of this

survey work is to do dedicated follow up with members to connect them directly with the resources they seek.

Chapter Count	Need	Resource(s)
32	Support and resources on engaging membership, making direct asks, listwork, developing a bigger core, and 1-on-1 organizing conversations	Trainings: List Work Workshop Building Capacity & Developing Leadership Skills Structured Organizing Conversations
21	Support and resources related to tech tools like ActionNetwork	Org Tools, supported by national staff, offer training and guides on how to use Spoke, ActionNetwork, and Scale to Win
18	Resources re: Member Development	Trainings: List Work Workshop Building Capacity & Developing Leadership Skills Structured Organizing Conversations
17	Resources re: Outreach & Recruitment	Trainings: List Work Workshop Structured Organizing Conversations Recruitment through Campaigns
13	Creating a Committee, Working Group, or Coordinator Role	Trainings: New Members Onboarding Training Self-organized session at 2023 Convention; New GDC project coming Fall 2023
13	Resources re: Retention	Trainings: Membership Drive Training
10	Media, Comms, Design Support	National Design Folder

3	Money, Funds	Training: Grassroots Fundraising Upcoming income based dues drive; Recommitment 2022 and Convention 2023 membership drive resources
2	Meeting Space	Training: Grassroots Fundraising Matching Funds for Offices Program

External Organizing & Chapter Campaigns

National Priority Issue Areas

We asked participating chapters to share which issue areas they were and were not active in. We asked about the following areas:

Abolition/Defund
Anti-Fascism/Red Rabbits
Electoral
Housing
Green New Deal/EcoSoc
Immigration
Internationalism/Anti-War
Labor
Medicare for All (M4A)
Mutual Aid
Palestine/BDS
Queer/LGBTQIA
Religion, Spirituality, & Socialism
Socialist Feminism

In addition to asking which issue areas chapters were generally active in, we also asked whether chapters were doing the following for each issue area in the past year:

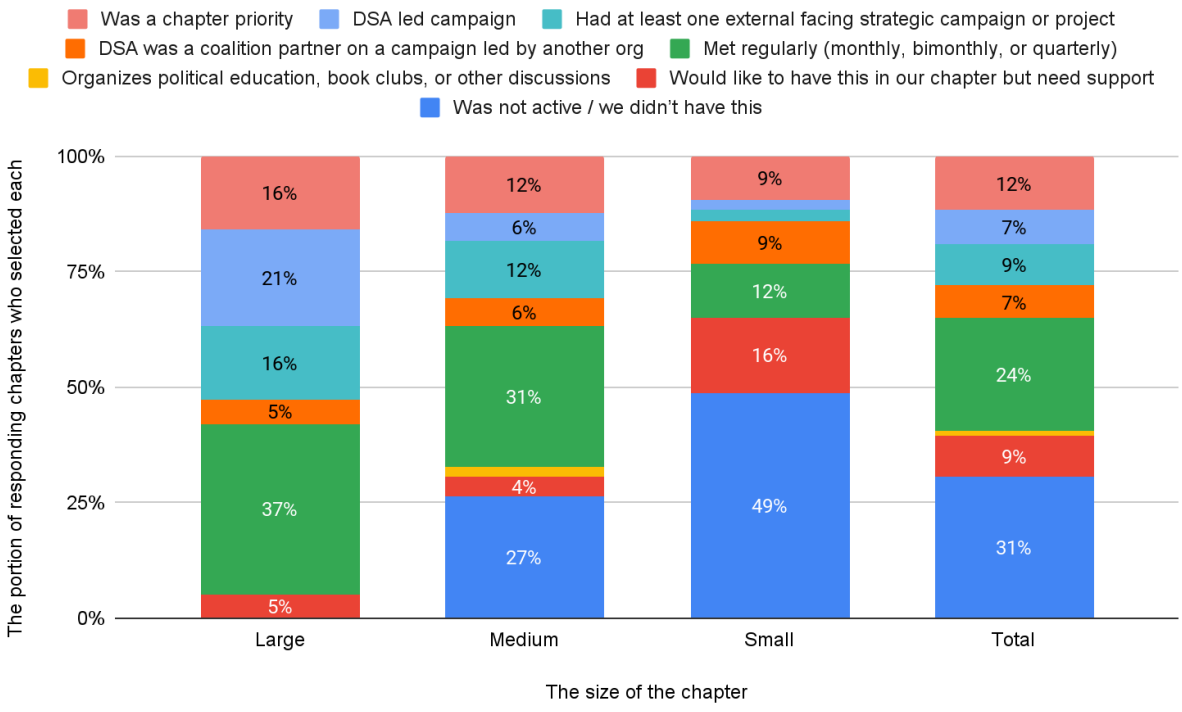
- Was a chapter priority
- DSA-led campaign
- DSA was a coalition partner on a campaign led by another org
- Had at least one external facing strategic campaign or project
- Met regularly (monthly, bimonthly, or quarterly)
- Organizes political education, book clubs, or other discussions

- Would like to have this in our chapter but need support
- Was not active / we didn't have this

Please note that a survey design flaw limits our analysis in this section. The survey team intended for chapters to respond with all relevant activity categories for each issue area. However, in the survey instrument chapters used, responses were unintentionally limited to one activity category for each issue area. We regret this error, and didn't catch it until we were analyzing results. Therefore, our analysis below operates under the assumptions that chapters responded by choosing the option that best describes their work in each issue area.

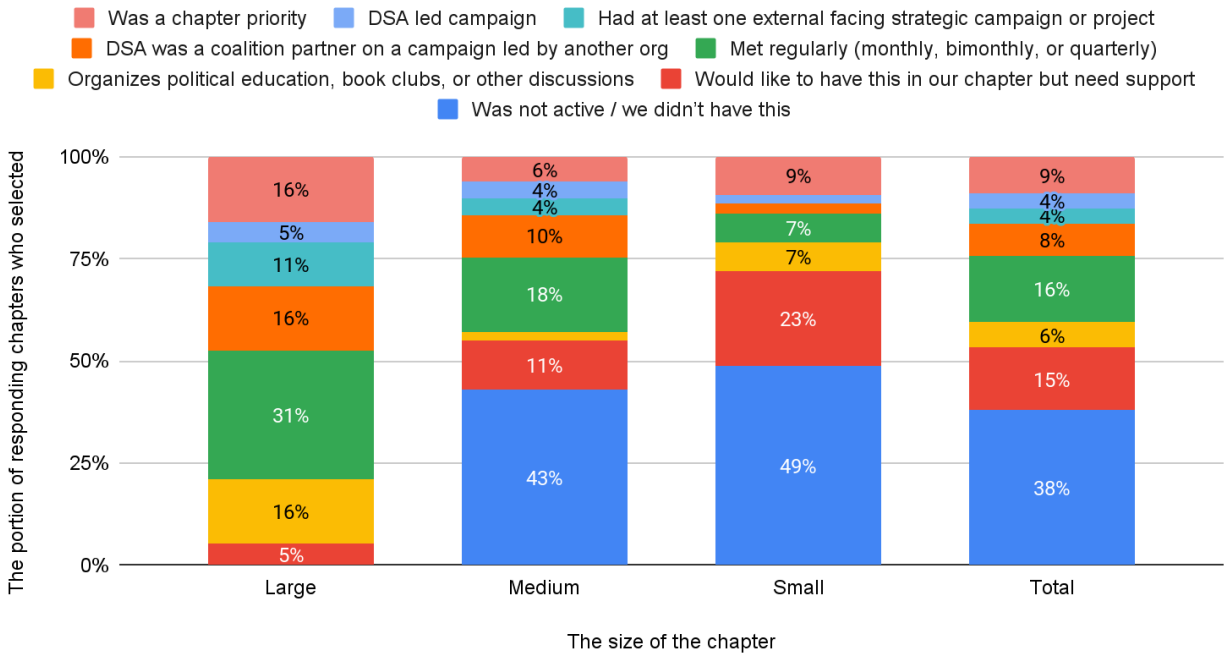
Despite the flaw, this year's survey offers a bit more information. For example, the 2022 survey simply asked whether chapters had an active committee or working group for non-priority issue areas. With this year's survey, chapters could give a bit more detail about what types of work they did locally on issue areas that were not national priorities.

Graph 29. Electoral Activity of Responding Chapters



- All responding chapters: 67/111 chapters have some activity around the electoral work, and another 10 would like to have activity. 44/111 chapters did not have any activity.
- Small responding chapters: 15/43 chapters have activity around the electoral national priority, and another 7 would like to have activity. 28/43 chapters had no activity.
- Medium responding chapters: 34/49 chapters have activity around the electoral national priority, and 2 more would like to have activity. 15/49 chapters did not have any activity.
- Large responding chapters: 18/19 chapters have activity around electoral work, and the other large chapter would like to have electoral work but would like support.

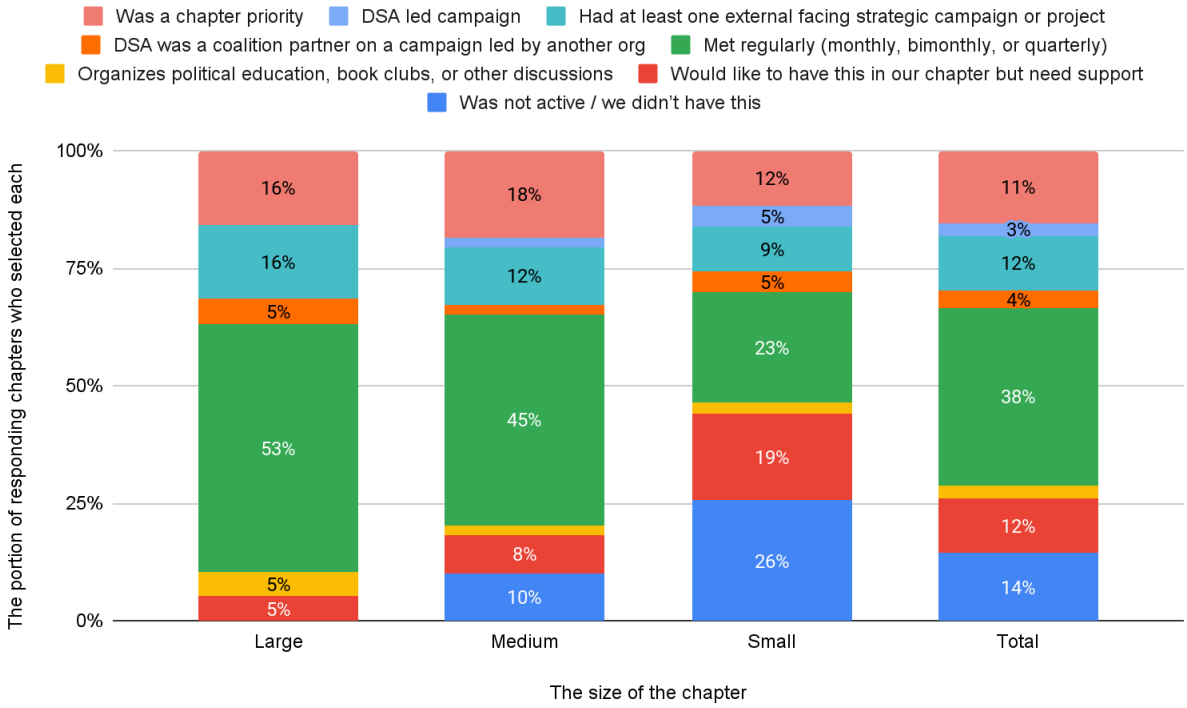
Graph 30. Green New Deal Activity of Responding Chapters



- All responding chapters: 52/111 have Green New Deal activity, and another 17 would like to have activity. 59/111 chapters did not have any activity.
- Small responding chapters: 12/43 have Green New Deal activity, and another 10 would like to have activity. 31/43 chapters did not have any activity.

- Medium responding chapters: 22/49 have Green New Deal activity, and another 6 would like to. 27/49 chapters did not have any activity.
- Large responding chapters: 18/19 chapters have Green New Deal activity, and the other large chapter would like to but would like support.

Graph 31. Labor Activity of Responding Chapters



- All responding chapters: 82/111 have labor activity, and another 13 would like to. 29/111 chapters did not have any activity.
- Small responding chapters: 24/43 have labor activity, and another 8 would like to. 19/43 chapters did not have any activity.
- Medium responding chapters: 40/49 have activity around the national priority of Labor, and another 4 would like to have activity. 9/49 chapters did not have any activity.
- Large responding chapters: 17/19 have activity around the national priority of Labor, and the other large chapter would like to have electoral work but would like support.

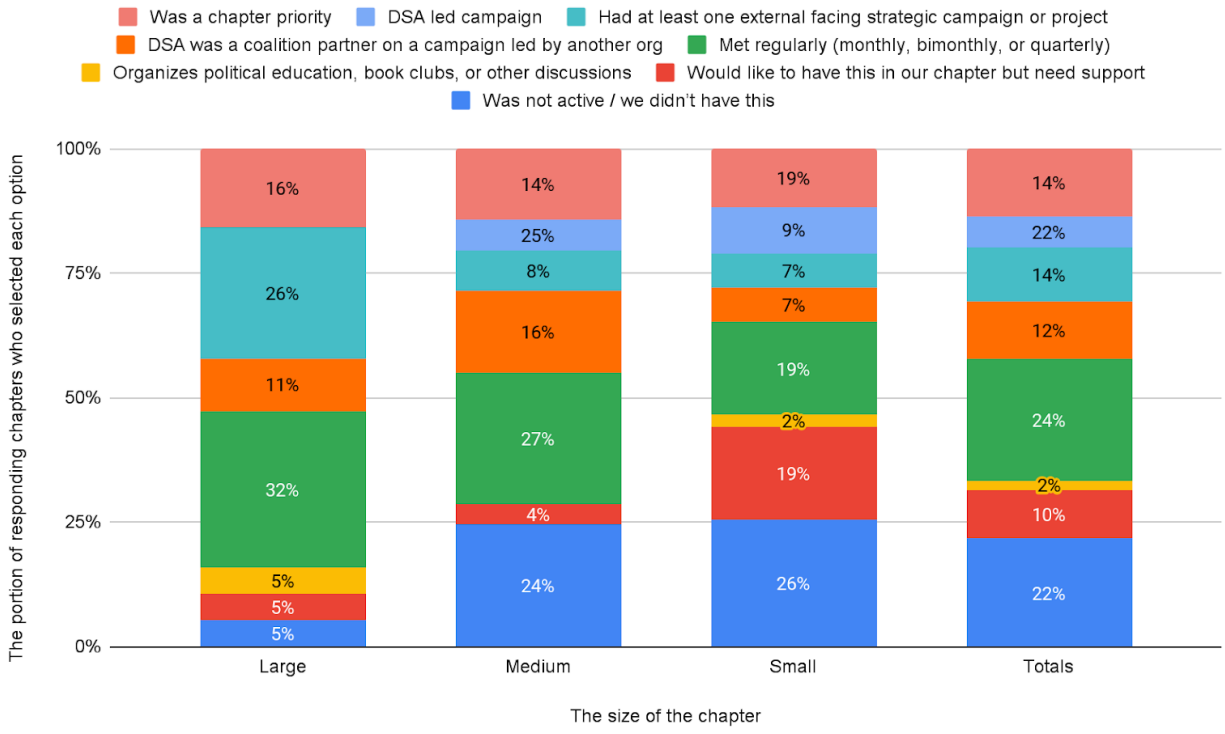
Non-National Priority Issue Areas

We asked chapters the same questions for 11 other issue areas. The graphs for these are included in the appendix. Most of the responding chapters did not have activity in these areas.

- Abolition/Defund:
    - 38/111 have activity, and another 10 would like to have activity. 73/111 chapters did not have any activity.
- Antifascism/Red Rabbits:
    - 16/111 have activity, and another 17 would like to have activity. 95/111 chapters did not have any activity.
- Immigration:
    - 10/111 have activity, and another 15 would like to have activity. 101/111 chapters did not have any activity.
- Internationalism:
    - 31/111 have activity, and another 11 would like to have activity. 80/111 chapters did not have any activity.
- Medicare for All:
    - 24/111 have activity around, and another 11 would like to have activity. 87/111 chapters did not have any activity.
- Palestinian Solidarity/BDS:
    - 29/111 have activity around, and another 8 would like to have activity. 82/111 chapters did not have any activity.
- Religious Socialism:
    - 5/111 have activity around, and another 7 would like to have activity. 106/111 chapters did not have any activity.

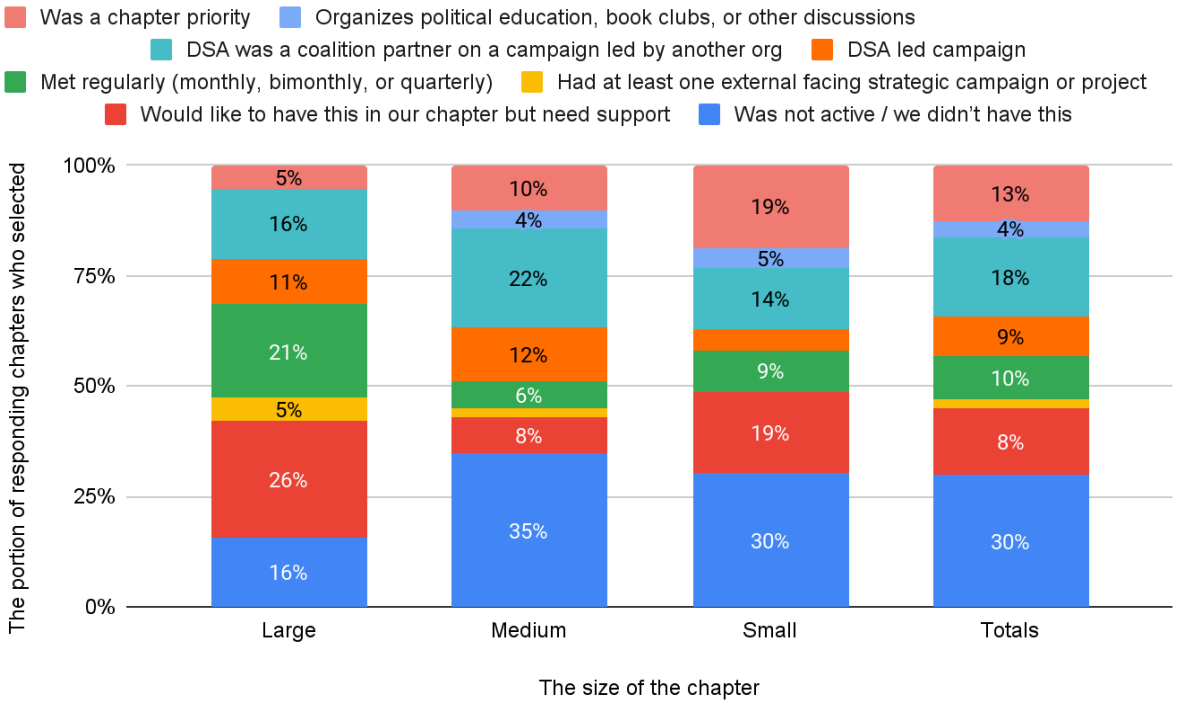
Below we will focus on and visualize the 3 non-national priority issue areas with the highest levels of activity: housing, mutual aid, and socialist feminism.

Graph 32. Housing Activity of Responding Chapters



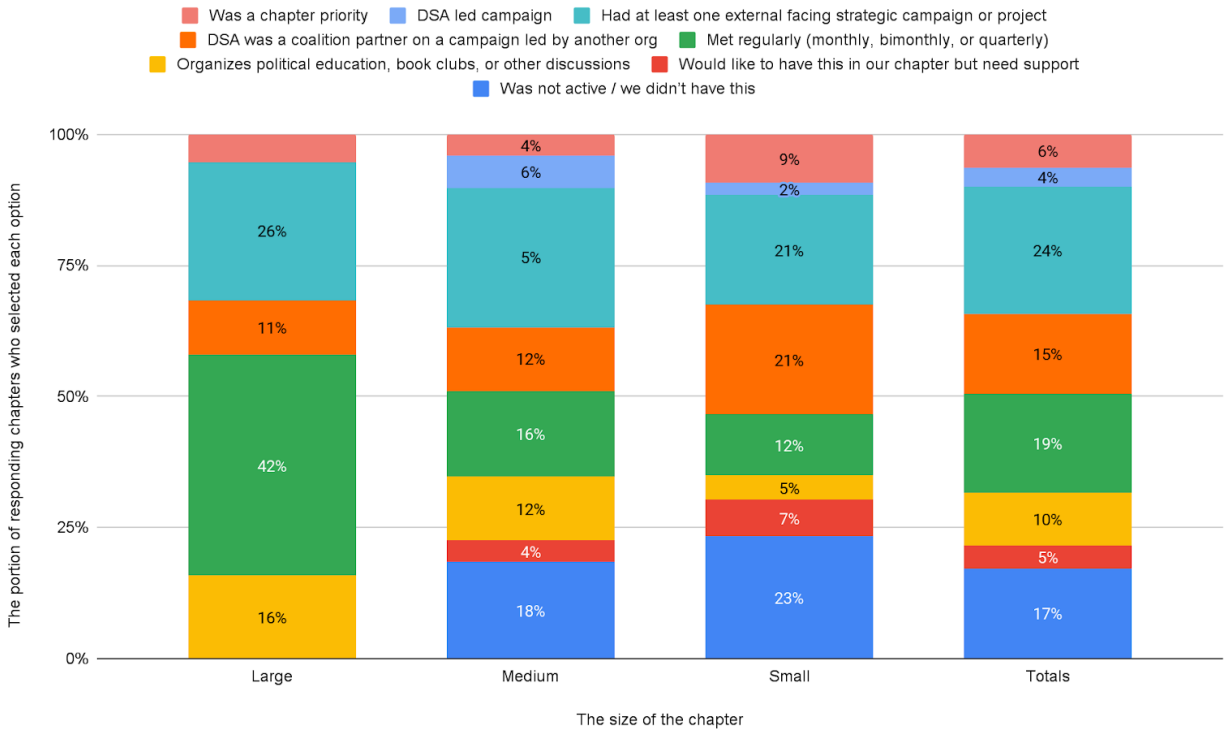
- <u>All responding chapters</u>:
    - 76/111 have activity around Housing, and another 11 would like to have activity. 35/111 chapters did not have any activity.
- <u>Small responding chapters</u>:
    - 24/43 have activity around Housing, and another 8 would like to have activity. 19/43 chapters did not have any activity.
- <u>Medium responding chapters</u>:
    - 35/49 have activity around Housing, and another 2 would like to have activity. 14/49 chapters did not have any activity.
- <u>Large responding chapters</u>:
    - 17/19 chapters have activity around Housing, and another 1 would like to have activity. 2/19 chapters did not have any activity.

Graph 33. Mutual Aid Activity of Responding Chapters



- <u>All responding chapters</u>:
    - 61/111 have activity around Mutual Aid, and another 17 would like to have activity. 50/111 chapters did not have any activity.
- <u>Small responding chapters</u>:
    - 22/43 have activity around Mutual Aid, and another 8 would like to have activity. 21/43 chapters did not have any activity.
- <u>Medium responding chapters</u>:
    - 28/49 have activity around Mutual Aid, and another 4 would like to have activity. 21/49 chapters did not have any activity.
- <u>Large responding chapters</u>:
    - 11/19 chapters have activity around Mutual Aid, and another 5 would like to have activity. 8/19 chapters did not have any activity.

Graph 34. Socialist Feminist Activity of Responding Chapters



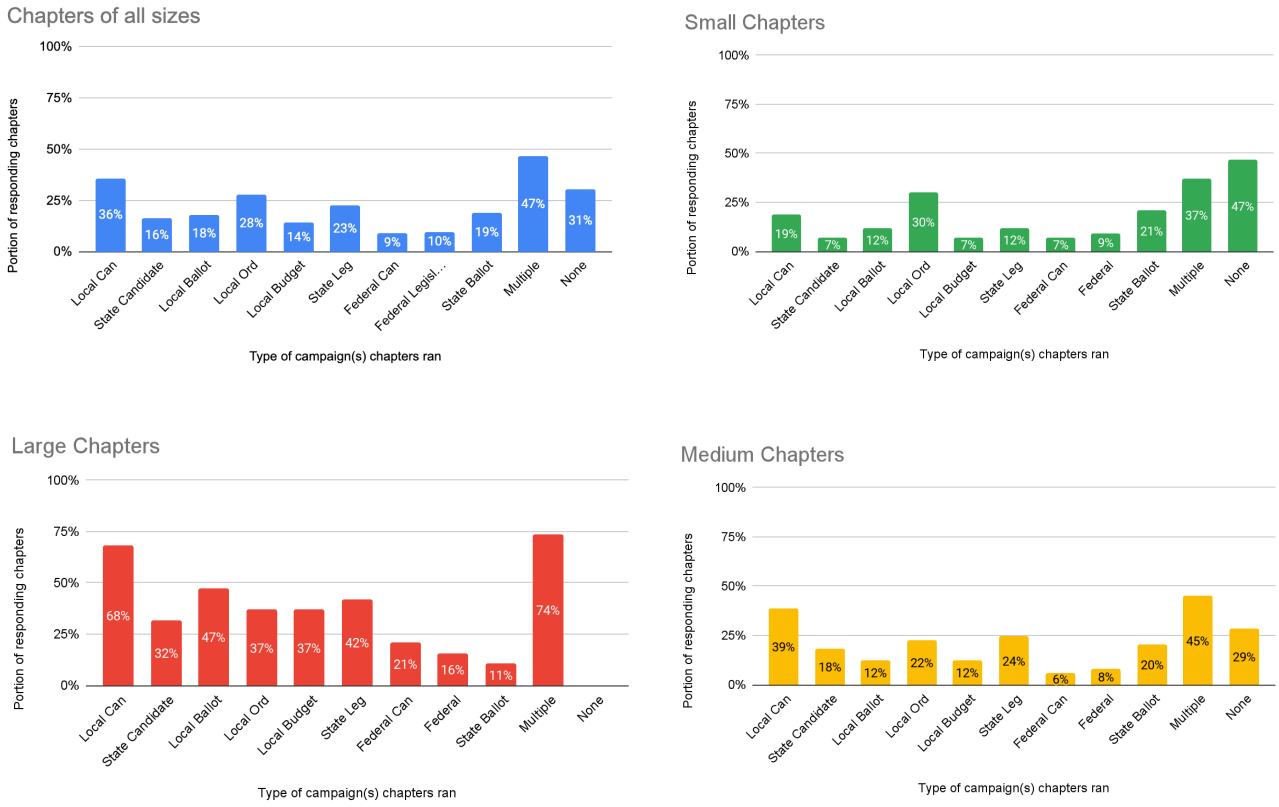
- <u>All responding chapters</u>:
    - 87/111 have activity around Socialist Feminism, and another 5 would like to have activity. 24/111 chapters did not have any activity.
- <u>Small responding chapters</u>:
    - 30/43 have activity around Socialist Feminism, and another 3 would like to have activity. 13/43 chapters did not have any activity.
- <u>Medium responding chapters</u>:
    - 38/49 have activity around Socialist Feminism, and another 2 would like to have activity. 11/49 chapters did not have any activity.
- <u>Large responding chapters</u>:
    - 19/19 chapters have activity around Socialist Feminism.

Electoral and Pressure Campaigns

We asked chapters what kinds of electoral and pressure campaigns they ran:

Local Candidate	Local Budget	State Legislative
State Candidate	Federal Candidate	Action
Local Ballot Measure	Federal Legislative	Multiple Campaigns
Local Ordinance	Action	None

Graph 35-38. Electoral and Pressure Campaigns Chapters Run, by Chapter Size



- The responses to this question mirror what we saw with electoral work. As chapters grow in size, they become more likely to run an electoral campaign of some kind. There is somewhat prominent discourse that being in a smaller chapter makes the work of running campaigns too difficult. These findings challenge those assumptions, as 16 small chapters indicated they ran multiple campaigns in the past year. Indeed, in rural or smaller areas, it is even more likely that important electoral decisions are made by a few

hundred votes, and DSA chapters in these areas have an incredible opportunity to create change through these types of campaigns.

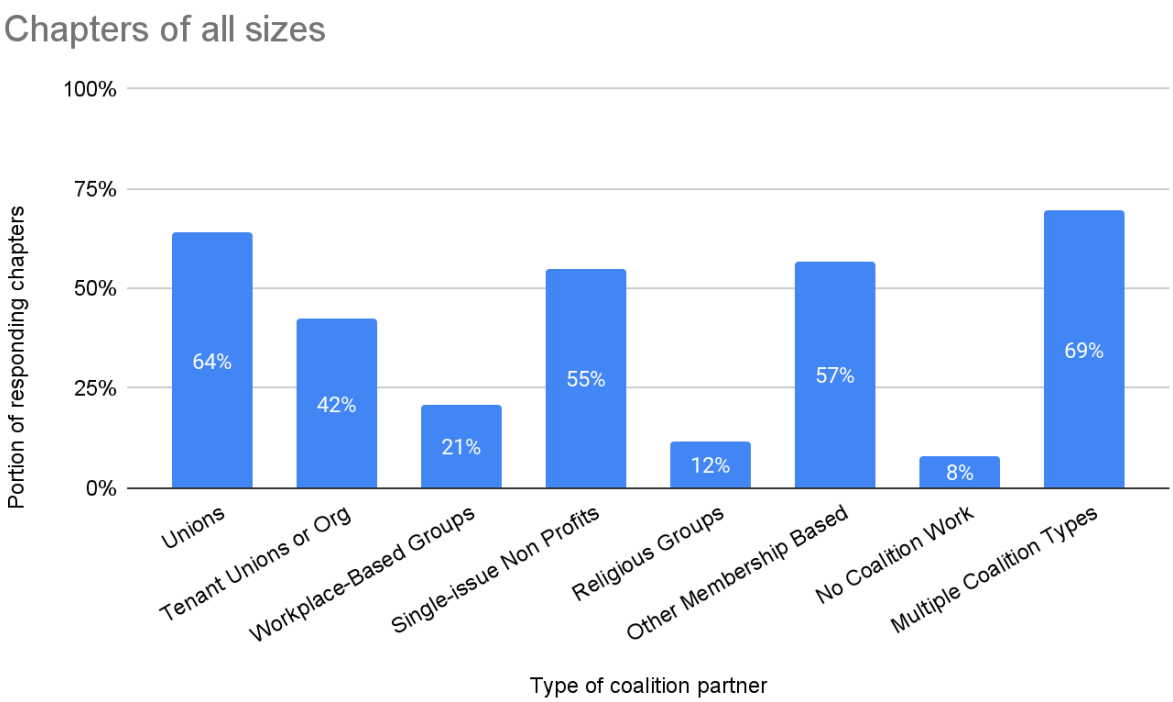
- Local campaigns are more likely to be run by chapters of all sizes. Similarly, federal races and legislative campaigns were less likely to be run by chapters of all sizes. This makes sense, as federal campaigns require more resource coordination and organizing across a wider area. Moreover, fights at the federal level are higher profile, often leading to our opponents throwing even more organized money and resources into the fight.

Coalition Partners

We asked chapters about the types of coalition partners they worked with:

Unions	Tenants Unions
Single Issue Non-Profits	Other Membership Based Orgs
Workplace-based Orgs	Religious Groups

Graph 39. Types of coalitions partners responding DSA chapters worked with



- Most of the chapters surveyed have coalitions. Only 9/111 chapters surveyed said they did not have any coalition partners, and most of the chapters surveyed shared they were in coalition with multiple types of groups.

- The most common answers were labor unions (71 chapters), single issue non-profit organizations (61 chapters), and other membership-based organizations (63 chapters).
- Large chapters were more likely than chapters of other sizes to work with tenant's unions and workplace-based organizations, perhaps because there may be more diverse ecosystems of established groups where they are.
- After no coalition partners, the least common coalitions chapters formed were with faith based groups. However, faith based groups should not be underestimated and often have radical politics rooted in their beliefs.

Coalition building is an important part of running successful campaigns and building a mass working-class movement. We recommend developing resources to support chapters in developing strong coalitions and successfully navigating the contradictions that come with this work. As the next section on open-response feedback shows, chapters are seeking more guidance and support in this area.

External Organizing Open Ended Questions

External Organizing Challenges in the Past Year

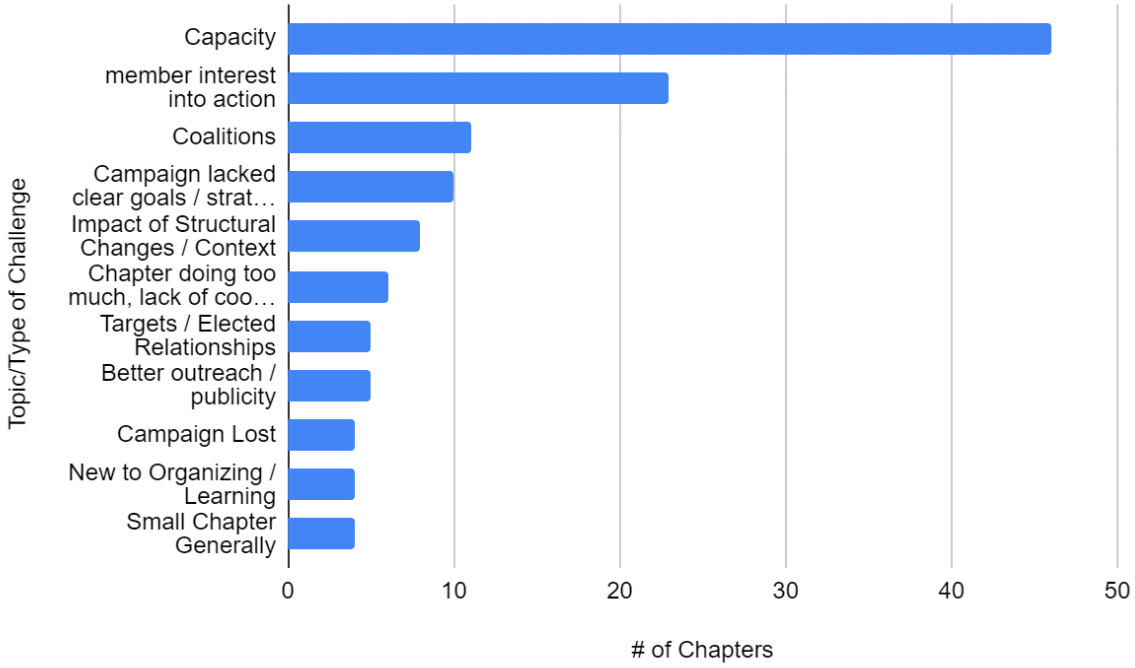
We asked chapters through open response questions to share what the biggest challenges were in the past year related to external organizing and campaigns. Sixty-four chapters responded to this question, about 58% of the 111 chapters who responded to the survey.

Table 40. Chapter External Organizing Challenges in Past Year

Type of External Organizing Challenge	Number of Chapters
Capacity: Clear asks, ladder of engagement, getting people plugged in	46
Turning member interest into action	23
Coalitions: Any/All Challenges Named	11
Campaign lacked clear goals / strategy / tactics	10

Impact of Structural Changes / Context	8
Chapter doing too much, lack of coordination with WGs/campaigns	6
Targets / Elected Relationships	5
Better outreach / publicity	5
Campaign Lost	4
New to Organizing / Learning	4
Small Chapter Generally	4

Graph 41. Chapter External Organizing Challenges in Past Year



The biggest challenge for chapters in the past year related to their external organizing was developing capacity for members to plug into a campaign. Without developing a clear set of tasks and ways to contribute to a campaign, the bulk of the work rests on a small core of committed members. Without a ladder of engagement, members weren't able to develop more and different skills through the campaign, and new leaders couldn't transition in to help take on core campaign work.

> The challenges are mostly with sustaining our organizing capacity and member interest. Members will act excited about campaigns at first, but then lose interest quickly. This then leads to burnout on behalf of the main campaign organizers who cannot sustain everything on their own. -Medium Size Chapter

Similarly, the second most common response had to do with turning member interest into action. Chapters would describe passing resolutions to work on a campaign that had overwhelming support, but when the time came to move the campaign forward, it was more difficult to recruit support. Two things that may help with this are continuing to strengthen best practices such as listwork and making asks through one-on-one organizing conversations. Supporting chapters in developing democratic processes for determining priorities may also help address this, as we see a small number of chapters currently have this process built out. Related to this, six chapters named that *too many* campaigns or active working-groups in their chapter, and a lack of coordination between them all, led to overall decreased capacity to carry out any area of work.

> Our chapter as a whole has a tendency to greenlight any idea for a project, which leads to too many projects and too little engagement with those projects. Even though we don't have very many active working groups, those working groups often have too many irons in the fire and not enough clarity of vision. The Starbucks campaign was an exception that was helpful for demonstrating what a more focused effort can look like. -Medium Size Chapter

Eleven chapters named challenges related to coalition work, the third most common response. Three chapters named tensions with navigating strategic differences within the coalition; two chapters described challenges with forming coalitions at all; two chapters names challenges of working with coalitions that would meet during normal working hours, excluding working people in the coalition; two chapters describes challenges where coalition partners would direct member work into their organization, which took away from DSA's capacity; and two chapters named challenges related to knowing how DSA would fit into the coalition or what role they would have in the work. Coalitions are important to winning material change, and there are plenty of tensions and contradictions to navigate here. The GDC offers a Fundamentals of Coalition Building training which may help. In addition, we recommend working with other national bodies to develop resources to both help chapters navigate these tensions and also collect the successes and lessons learned from chapters doing this work.

Another common challenge that ten chapters shared had to do with external conditions or reactionary changes impacting the work. For example, a few chapters mentioned gerrymandering or redistricting impacting their electeds' abilities to successfully run for reelection, and another chapter shared that the local government changed the process for bringing forward a ballot initiative, adding additional barriers to their work. We know we are organizing under hostile contexts, and more work can be done to gather strategies and lessons learned for how to navigate these conditions.

Five chapters named challenges related to elected officials or campaign targets. This included an elected official target under-delivering on a demand from a pressure campaign. Another chapter shared they worked to endorse a candidate for office, and when that run failed, their relationship with the chapter ended. Three chapters named either hostility or ineffective governance from Democrats or Republicans in power that negatively impacted their work. Building socialist in office committees in chapters with support from the National Electoral Committee will help chapters navigate these tensions and share insights.

External Organizing Successes in the Past Year

Chapters were asked to share some of their biggest external organizing successes in the past year.

Table 42. Chapter External Organizing Successes in Past Year

Category of Success	# of Chapters Named
Electoral, any	35
Coalitions	30
Labor	28
Legislation, Policy, Reforms	25
Housing, Tenant Organizing	22
Bodily Autonomy (Trans Rights, Reproductive Rights)	20
Electoral Candidate	17
Mutual Aid, Fundraising	15

Ecosocialism	12
Rallies, Marches, Demos	8
Abolition	8
Healthcare (M4A, not related to Reproductive Rights)	3
Anti-Fascist	3
BDS / Palestine	1

35 chapters shared electoral victories of some kind. 25 chapters mentioned some kind of policy, reform, or legislative win, and 18 chapters mentioned a win related to an electoral candidate.

> We've had some success in shedding light on how bloated our city's police budget is, and managed to fight our municipal leadership enough to get them to give up a couple million dollars of ARPA funds originally earmarked for cops. The money hasn't been spent yet, but is scheduled to go towards youth and poverty reduction programs (possibly a UBI pilot). -Small Chapter

> Our Elections & Pressure Campaigns Committee is really active. We have three endorsed candidates and pushed for other things recently (anti-fracking in parks with EcoSocialism Committee, budget measures). -Large Chapter

> We also are very pleased that one of our members became the first ever DSA member to be elected to a governmental office here in our county. -Medium Chapter

30 chapters shared wins related to building coalitions or strong relationships with other groups fighting for the working class, such as unions.

> We have had great success leading and building a strong coalition in support of a living wage for all workers at [Name] University, the largest employer in our county. -Small Chapter

28 chapters shared labor victories. Within this, 11 chapters mentions Starbucks campaign work specifically and another 8 chapters mentioned some form of strike support for workers in their community.

> Our chapter has done a variety of labor organizing work in the past year, joining EWOC as an official chapter, and hosting two "how to organize your workplace" training series. We

> continue to build relationships with organizing and newly organized shops around St. Louis. We secured commitment to sign ons from all of our endorsed electeds on the Teamsters Strike Support letter and have passed a chapter resolution committing to be strike ready. -Medium Chapter

> Our Labor WG hosted multiple sip-ins for the Starbucks workers unionizing their stores, got people to attend a one day Amazon strike, supported the work of a local worker center. -Medium Chapter

> We made contact with local Starbucks unions, bought them signs, bought them coffee, member were directed to local GoFundMes for baristas, we joined picket lines, we held movie watch parties. We also wrote op eds for a local newsguild of a small paper going through a union drive. Made contact with a hospital union about to go on strike. Worked to palm card local Verizon Retail stores. -Medium Chapter

22 chapters shared wins related to housing work, 9 of which mentioned tenant's union organizing specifically.

> One example of a success (that came out of a loss) was (our) members' work on [ballot measure] in [city]. It was a ballot initiative that sought to provide eviction defense to anyone facing eviction in the city. While the ballot initiative was ultimately voted down, the organizing within DSA's Housing Justice group and with the broader community set the groundwork for the new Metro Tenants Union. -Large Chapter

> Built tenant unions across the state, including several that have won victories through municipal law or are currently on rent strike; organized tenants to campaign for a cap on rent increases and good cause evictions, which although we lost in committee built groundwork for making our CT Tenants Union project truly independent and tenant led. -Large Chapter

20 chapters described wins related to bodily autonomy, including trans rights and liberation or abortion rights and reproductive justice. 19 chapters were working specifically on abortion rights and reproductive justice, and six chapters described successful fundraising for abortion access funds. Another three chapters named other socialist feminist work, like organizing a panel on sex workers and labor rights, and about a half dozen more spoke specifically to organizing in support of trans and queer communities.

> We organized basically the only protest in the area when the news leaked of Roe v Wade being repealed. -Small Chapter

> We held two successful movie fundraisers where we raised some money for some organizations that facilitate abortion. -Medium Chapter

> The chapter ran the Access for All campaign where we defeated a ballot measure which would have banned abortion access from the Kentucky state constitution. We made over 3 million contacts via text and phone calls to all voters in Kentucky. We can semi-confidently say that our campaign was what moved the needle into this ballot measure being defeated. -Medium Chapter

15 chapters shared wins related to mutual aid and fundraising. This looked like organizing food pantries, distributing facemasks during wildfires, and one chapter described a regular brake light clinic that they run at, and with the support of, a local library.

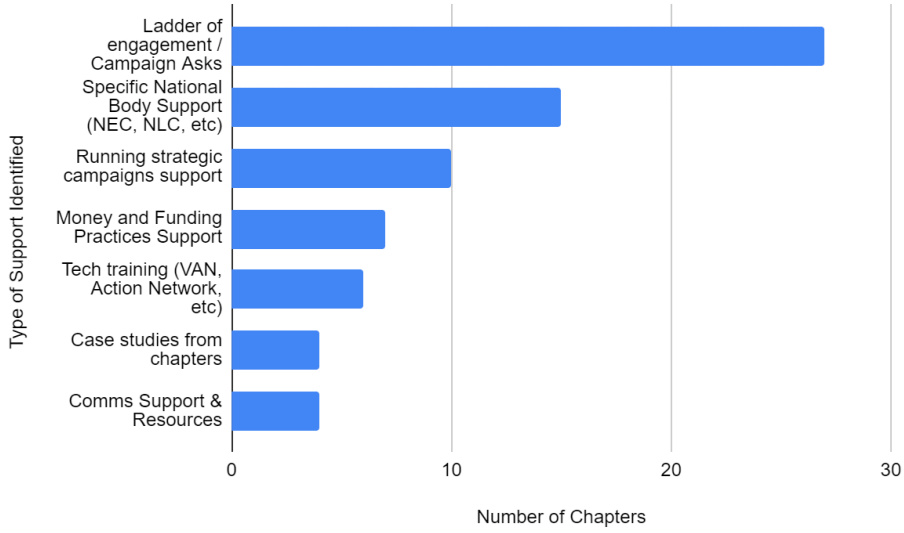
> Worked with a coalition in mutual aid to provide queer people in South Carolina. Potlucks, make up training, voice training, gender affirming clothing swap. Also helped provide community defense of a drag show. -Small Chapter

> We started an effort to create a tool library. We are in the process of working with the local library system to create a tool library at one of their locations. -Medium Chapter

External Organizing for the Year Ahead

Finally, chapters were asked what support or resources they would need for external organizing work in the year ahead.

Graph 43. External Organizing Supports For Year Ahead



27 chapters shared needing support on developing clear campaign asks and a ladder of engagement in campaigns to ensure all areas of campaign work were done, and all layers of membership brought into the work. The second most common support was requested from specific national bodies, such as national priority committees or working groups, which 15 chapters named in their responses. Ten chapters named support on developing and running strategic campaigns. Seven chapters requested support and resources on fundraising, both generally and within the context of electoral work. Another six chapters named tech resources and training, like with VAN (Voter Action Network). Four chapters similarly requested communications support and resources.

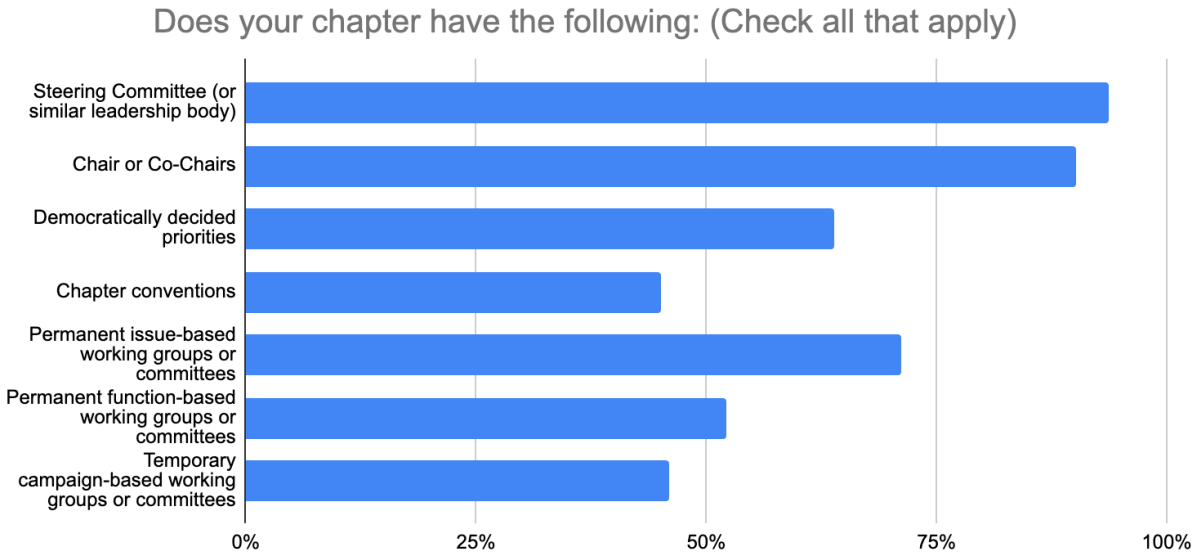
A few chapters shared that having case studies and examples from other chapters would be helpful.

Number of Chapters	**Type of Support Identified**	**Resources Available**
27	Ladder of engagement / Campaign Asks	Training: Structured Organizing Conversations Recruitment Through Campaigns Listwork Building Capacity, Developing Leadership Skills
15	Specific National Body Support (NEC, NLC, etc)	Connect to relevant national bodies
10	Running strategic campaigns support	Training: Strategic Campaigns
7	Money and Funding Practices Support	Training: Chapter Treasurer Grassroots Fundraising
6	Tech training (VAN, Action Network, etc)	OrgTools training on VAN, Action Network
4	Case studies from chapters	Proposed in 2023 GDC Convention Resolution
4	Comms Support & Resources	DSA National Design Drive

Chapter Infrastructure

Chapter structure varies somewhat, but generally falls within certain parameters. The vast majority of chapters surveyed have some sort of Steering Committee and a Chair or Co-Chairs. Additionally, a majority of chapters have democratically decided priorities. Below the chapter leadership level, permanent issue-based committees/working groups and permanent function-based committees/working groups are both present in a majority of chapters surveyed (some chapters have one or the other). Chapter conventions and temporary campaign-based committees/working groups are also quite common, with both present in a little less than half of chapters in our results.

Graph 44. Chapter Structures



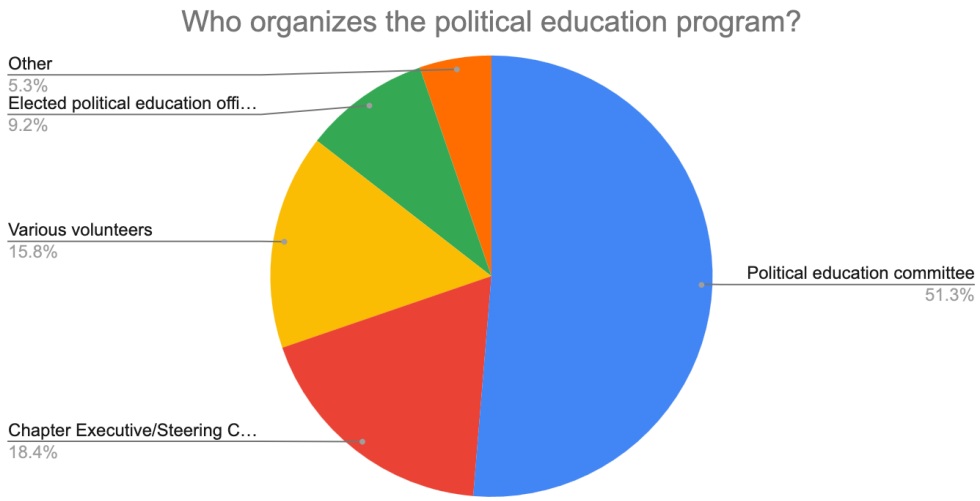
Sixteen chapters (14%) in our survey currently have offices, and nine more (8%) are working on getting one. Only one chapter that responded currently has a staffer, but three others are working on getting one (the other 96% have no plans for chapter staff at this time).

Political Education

Political education is a powerful tool for building our socialist project, which is reflected in the fact that 65 chapters (59% of those surveyed) have a current

political education program. Around half of chapters that do political education work have a dedicated committee for that purpose.

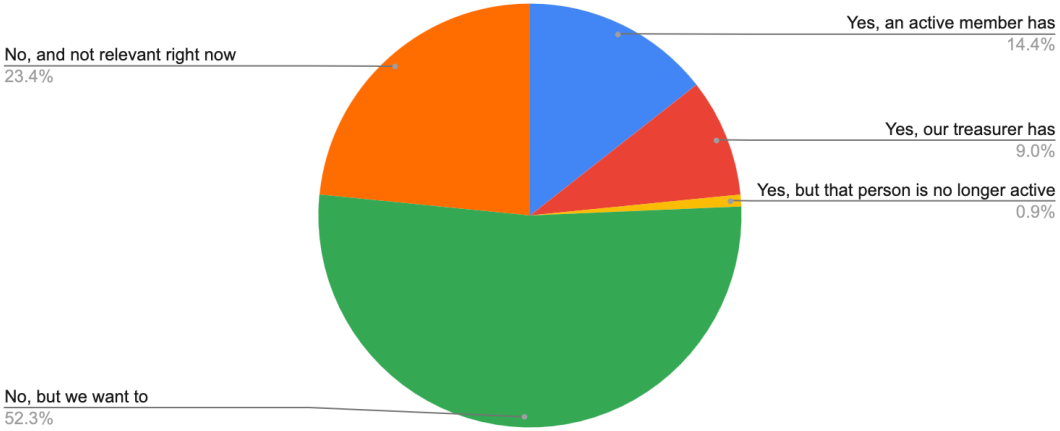
Graph 45. Political Education Programs



Fundraising

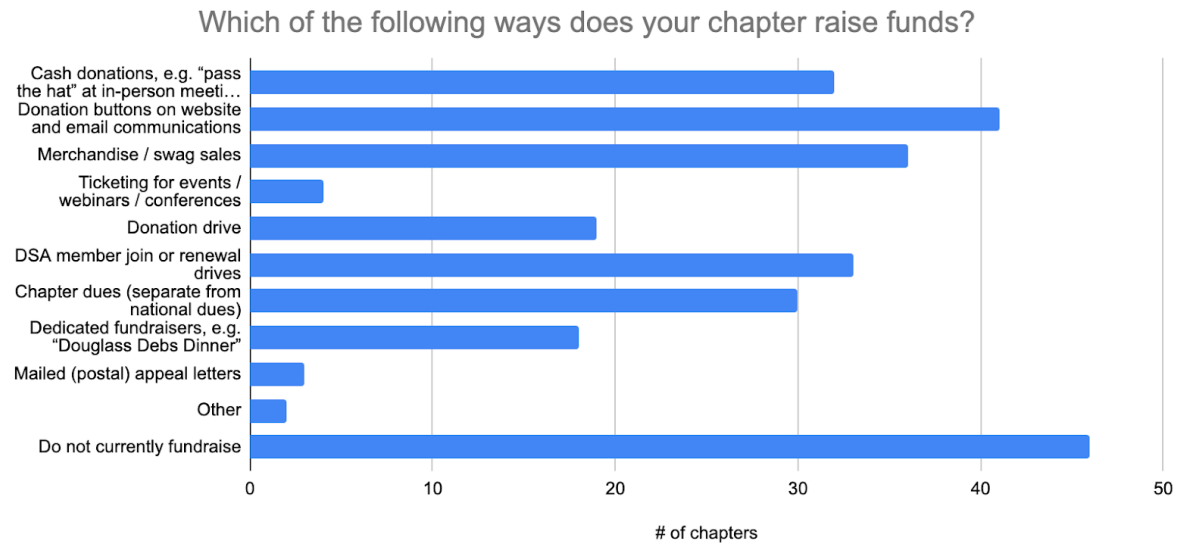
As a member-funded organization, fundraising is vital for sustaining DSA's work. About 24% of responding chapters have a chapter role dedicated to fundraising, and 39% have an annual budget process.. Additionally, about 24% of surveyed chapters have had a member participate in a grassroots fundraising training, and just over half have not but want to.

Graph 46. Has your chapter participated in a grassroots fundraising training?



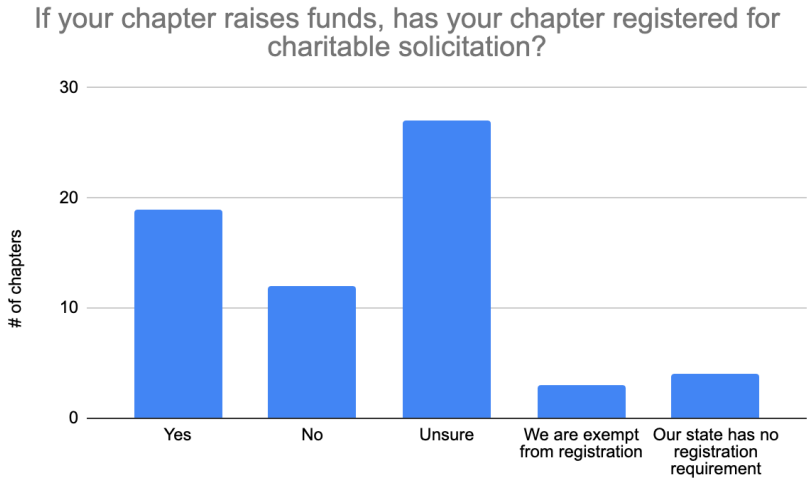
Sixty-five chapters (~59% of respondents) currently raise funds locally for their chapter, and they do so in a variety of different ways (see below). The “Other” responses were raffles and benefit shows/concerts.

Graph 47. Chapter Fundraising Methods



Nineteen chapters (about 17% of survey respondents) are registered for charitable solicitation.

Graph 48. Charitable Solicitation



Chapter funds over the past year varied a great deal, with the most common response (30%) being $1,000-$4,999.

Graph 49. Money or Revenue

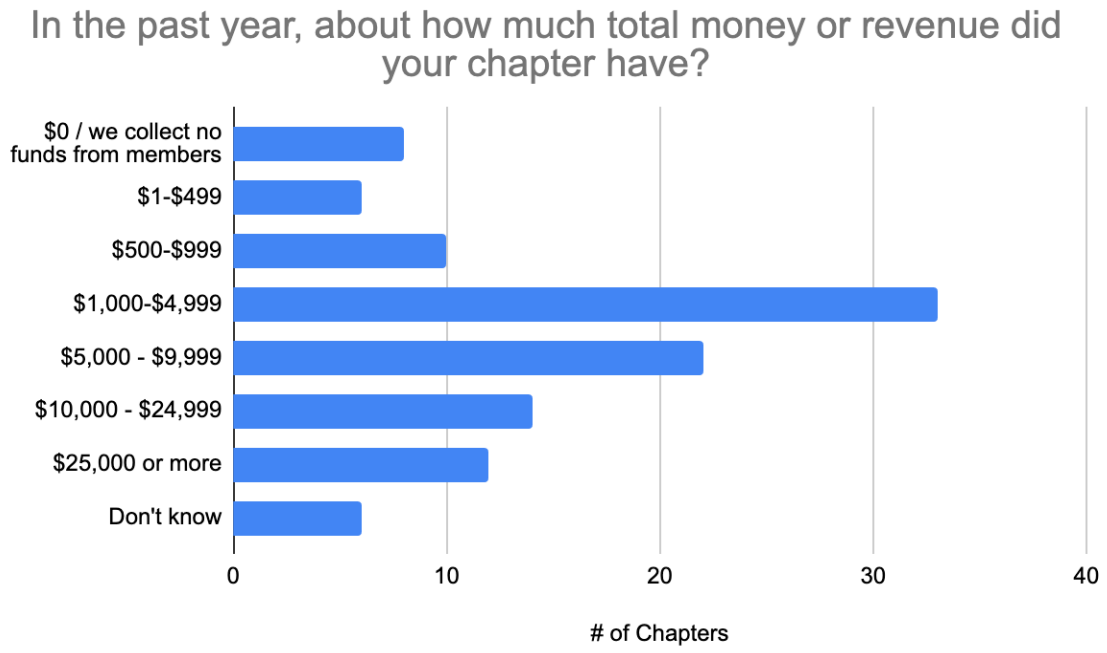
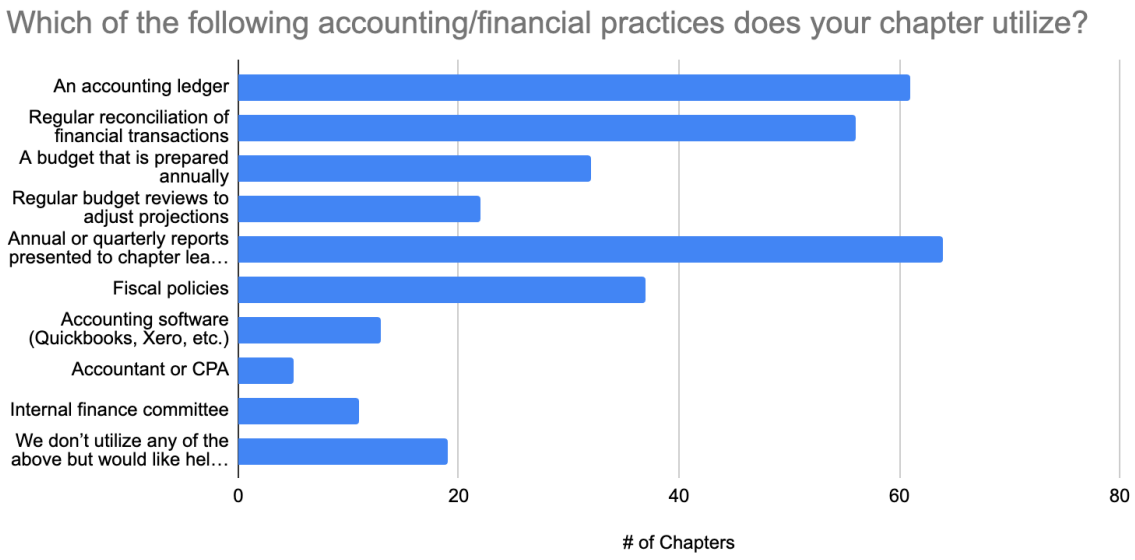


Chart 50. Accounting and Financial Practices


Which of the following accounting/financial practices does your chapter utilize?
An accounting ledger
Regular reconciliation of financial transactions
A budget that is prepared annually
Regular budget reviews to adjust projections
Annual or quarterly reports presented to chapter lea…
Fiscal policies
Accounting software (Quickbooks, Xero, etc.)
Accountant or CPA
Internal finance committee
We don't utilize any of the above but would like hel…
0
20
40
60
80
# of Chapters

Chapter structures vary but stay within a relatively narrow range. Further investigation is needed to see what works best and why, and it is possible that

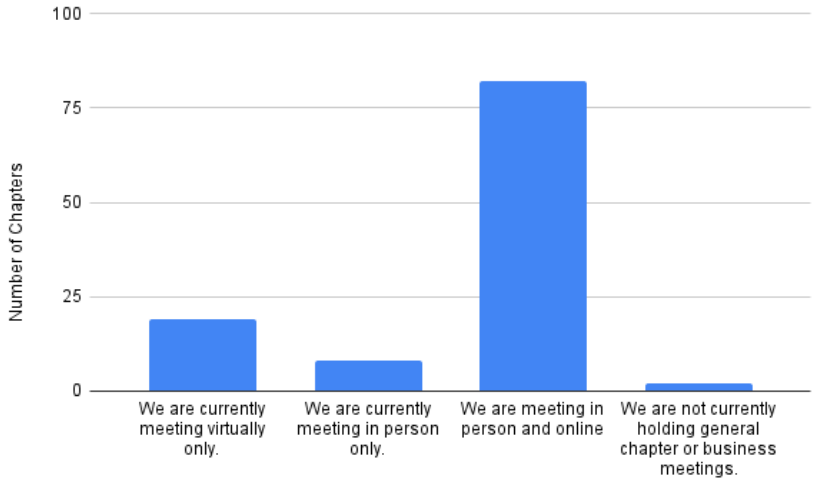
DSA could benefit from more structural standardization. Democratic prioritization is a sign of a serious organization, the chapters that do not do this should consider trying it. Balancing standardization and prioritization with experimentation and flexibility will be a constant but necessary tension for DSA to navigate. All chapters should be actively fundraising to support and sustain their work, and the staff and GDC offer a number of resources, such as training for fundraising and treasurers and financial compliance support. This should be paired with incorporation and sound budgetary practices. In addition, national DSA's upcoming income-based dues drive will be a good opportunity not only to raise funds for the national organization but to connect chapters to fundraising resources and highlight their importance.

Communications

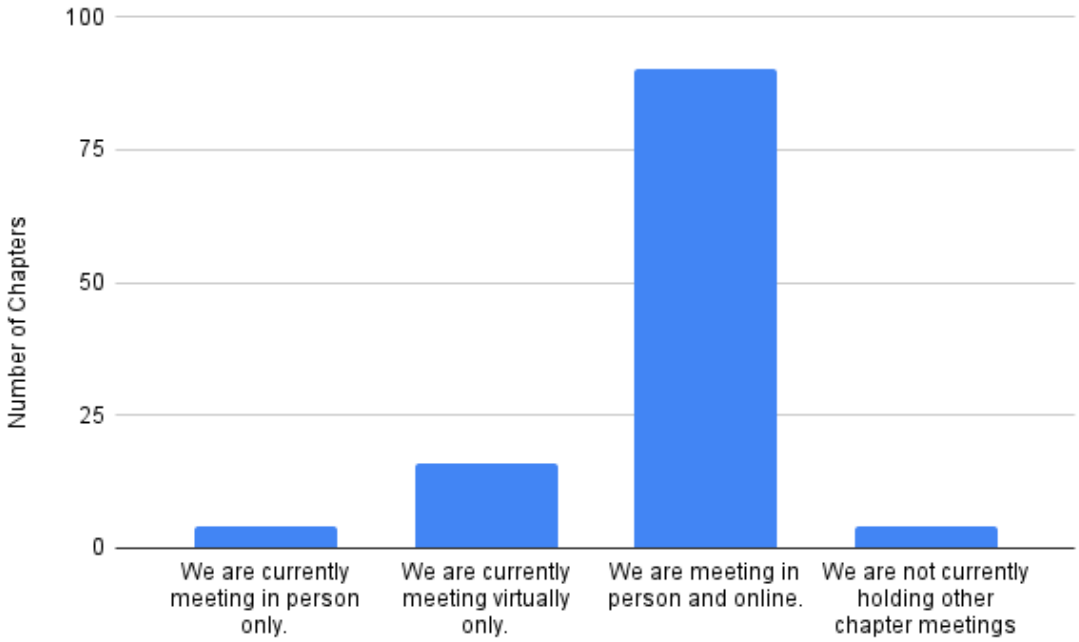
Chapter Meetings

Chapters were asked about their meeting format and tools they use to communicate with members. The vast majority of chapters reported that their general body as well as committee meetings were in a hybrid format with both virtual and in-person attendance. As the COVID pandemic continues to affect our society — and marginalized, working class people in particular — and DSA strives to become a larger more inclusive organization, commitments to accommodation like these must be encouraged and expanded. Chapters can also take advantage of resources through national, like access to a Zoom line, to hold hybrid meetings.

Graph 51: How Chapters are Holding General Body Meetings



Graph 52: How Chapters are Holding Committee Meetings and Other Events

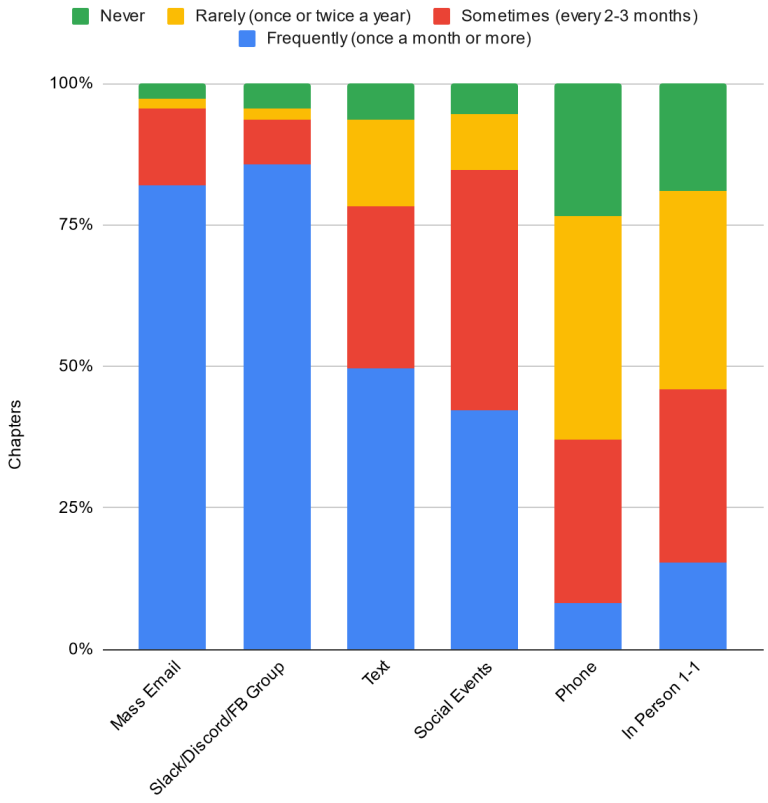


Member Outreach

Chapters were asked about six outreach methods (phone, text, in person 1-1s, social events, online chat groups, and mass email) and whether they've used them frequently (every month), sometimes (every 2-3 months), rarely (once or twice a year), or never in the past year.

The vast majority of chapters use many of these methods, with the median chapter using all six in the past year and using three frequently. More than 80% of chapters used both mass email and chat groups like Slack frequently, with more direct and time-intensive outreach methods being less frequently used. In order to better organize under-represented communities in particular and build DSA's membership in general, it will be important for the organization to expand our capability in direct intentional outreach methods in addition to our current broad implementation of wider-reaching tactics like mass email and social media.

Graph 53: Frequency of Use of Outreach Method



Our recommended next steps are:

- Work with Disability Working Group to expand our widespread meeting accessibility measures
- Help train chapters and build capacity in direct outreach methods like phoning (25% of chapters asked for assistance with mass dialers) and in-person 1:1s

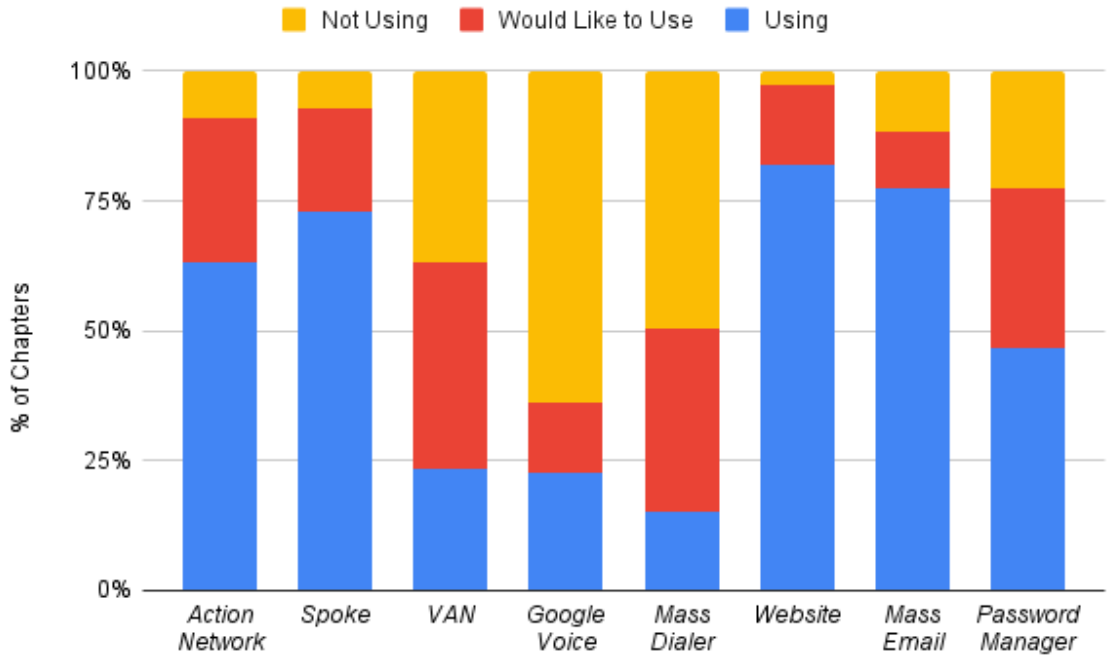
Tech & Security

Tech Tools

Chapters were asked whether they use, are not interested in, would like to use, are not sure how to use, or would like assistance with eight common chapter tech tools. Almost all chapters use a variety of these tools, with the median chapter using four of the eight. Tools related to basic chapter infrastructure and internal organizing were very widely used, with electoral tools like VAN and mass dialers much less common. However, these chapters have the ability to access VAN and

dialers like ScaletoWin through national OrgTools, and our national staff offer training on these tools as well.

Graph 54: Chapters Implementation of Specific Tech Tools



Chapter Tech Working Groups

Chapters were asked whether they have an official tech working group / committee, an unofficial working group or individual tech point person, or no point person / people responsible for chapter technology.

Chapters with active tech working groups or point people make up a narrow majority, while a large plurality do not have anyone officially responsible for chapter technology.

Table 55: Number of Chapters with Tech Working Groups or Point People

Status	# of Chapters	% of Surveyed Chapters
Active WG	17	15%
Inactive WG	2	2%

Individual / Informal WG	40	35%
No Point Person	53	47%

Our recommended next steps are:

- Work with National Tech Committee and National Electoral Committee to connect chapters to resources and trainings on tech tools like VAN and mass dialers, which many indicate a desire to use.
- Given the widespread usage of chapter infrastructure and internal organizing tools, GDC should integrate training on these tools to supplement the required non tech work from having 1:1's to coordinating a team to manage work.

Discussion

General Points:

- Summary:
    - The GDC has been running a chapter survey since 2020. This year we had our lowest response rate ever, only 111 chapters. Part of this may have been due to the timing of the survey coming right around when convention preparations were beginning to ramp up. Still, this is an ongoing challenge with coordination between various bodies in our organization.
- Next Steps
    - Although there will never be a perfect time to run a survey, we recommend the GDC run the chapter survey at the end/start of a calendar year.

Chapter Growth and Retention:

- Summary:
    - Our results show a very large difference between supporters and active members. This is, to some extent, inevitable in a mass membership organization with low barriers to entry like DSA and is not necessarily a bad thing. However, chapters should always be

striving to move people deeper into the bullseye to build their capacity and grow new leaders and organizers.

- Next Steps:
    - Connect chapters with leadership and internal organizing trainings and resources, highlighting their importance
    - Chapters with disproportionately high layers of Core and Active members should be consulted to determine what is working for them.

Recruitment:

- Almost no chapters reported that they were not doing any recruitment work, and in most cases it was handled by more than one member. This shows us that, for the chapters that participated in the survey, there is a very widespread commitment to this work as a key activity of the organization and priority for chapters.
- About a quarter of small chapters surveyed recruited a sizable number of new members (10-25 people). This finding demonstrates the potential need for a follow up to Kickstart Your Chapter training that integrates the lessons from small chapters that experienced growth by 10-25 people, so that other chapters can replicate that success.
- GDC should reach out to smaller chapters — which have shown outsized potential for growth through recruitment — to bring more experienced recruiters into the GDC and expand our capacity to help smaller chapters reach this potential

New Member Onboarding:

- Summary:
    - Most chapters surveyed do new member onboarding, but 18% do not, which is quite high and should be 0%. The members who carry out this work (if applicable) vary. Approximately 36% of chapters surveyed have some sort of formal committee dedicated to member onboarding (i.e. Membership, Internal Organizing, or Mobilizer Committee), while approximately 36% of chapters surveyed also shared this work was done by the steering committee.
- Next Steps:

    - These findings suggest that the GDC could help chapters take this work off of steering committees and/or provide more structure to internal organizing work. The GDC can encourage chapters to plug into our trainings on onboarding new members and building membership committees.

<u>Retention</u>:

- Summary:
    - Although DSA has benefited greatly from passive recruitment in the past, it is key that all chapters transition into more active and intentional recruitment and retention practices. This is happening! Nearly all of the chapters surveyed have done at least one retention practice in the past year, and most have done several. Similarly, chapters shared a ton of successes related to building out their retention, new member outreach, engagement and development work.
    - Most responding chapters do not have a designated member retention committee or role. Many chapters' steering committees are doing this work on top of other responsibilities, or the work is done on an ad hoc basis.
    - Based on open-ended responses, chapters' largest struggles were around capacity, developing a clear ladder of engagement and leadership development, and returning from a period of demobilization or burnout.
        - This is also reflected in data on membership layers, where about half of surveyed chapters (54 /111) have active membership layers of 20 members or less, and over half (62/111) of surveyed chapters had cores of 10 members or less.
- Next Steps:
    - Outreach chapters that have been developing this work successfully, and recruit their point people to join the GDC and share insights and resources
    - Connect chapters seeking more support to the many resources the GDC and National office offer for the challenges they face.

    - Support chapters in developing regular, sustaining retention practices, for we know the more consistently this work is done, the more effective it is.

Mapping Membership:

- Summary:
    - 70 chapters (of the 111 who responded to the survey) are member membership based on characteristics, and 45 are not. 30 chapters would like support.
    - Union membership and workplace are the most common things mapped, followed by member race, gender, and living situation.
- Next Steps:
    - In consultation with bodies like the NLC and MROC, build a membership mapping resource with chapter survey templates and best practices on mapping to make available to chapters, in consultation with bodies like the NLC and MROC.
    - Continue developing a membership mapping training or workshop

Accessibility:

- Summary:
    - Most chapters surveyed (108/111) have at least one accessibility practice, and 45 chapters indicated wanting support with this.
    - The most common practices were holding hybrid or online only meetings, and holding events in ADA accessible locations.
- Next Steps:
    - Make sure chapters know that resources like Zoom lines are available through National and OrgTools.
    - Work with national bodies like the Disability Working Group and chapters with strong accessibility practices to develop a best practices guide for chapters.

YDSA:

- Summary:
    - Just under 50 chapters (of 111 surveyed) are working with YDSA. Many more would like to, don't have YDSA in their area, or don't know if there's a YDSA chapter in their area.

- Next Steps:
    - Work with YDSA leadership to connect DSA and YDSA chapters.

External Organizing:

- Summary:
    - There are surveyed chapters of all sizes who were inactive in national priorities, but want to be active and are looking for support. 10/44 electorally inactive chapters were looking for support, 17/59 GND inactive chapters were looking for support, and 13/29 labor inactive chapters were looking for support.
- Next Steps:
    - The GDC should continue working with the GNCC to run a third Strategic Campaign Training collab targeting those 17 chapters looking for GND support. Additionally, the GDC should connect those electorally inactive chapters with the NEC, those labor inactive chapters with the NLC, and all chapters looking to be active in particular issues but looking for support to the relevant national body.

Chapter Infrastructure:

- Summary:
    - Chapter structures vary but stay within a relatively narrow range. Democratic prioritization is a sign of a serious organization, the chapters that do not do this should consider trying it. Balancing standardization and prioritization with experimentation and flexibility will be a constant but necessary tension for DSA to navigate.
    - Chapters need help with taking finances seriously. There is no reason that any less than 100% of chapters should be actively fundraising to support and sustain their work (although it may be that chapters do not know what to spend money on). This should be paired with incorporation and sound budgetary practices.
- Next Steps:
    - Further investigation is needed to see what chapter structures work best and why
    - Connect chapters to fundraising training

    - DSA's upcoming income-based dues drive will be a good opportunity not only to raise funds for the national organization but to connect chapters to fundraising resources and highlight their importance.

Chapter Internal Communications:

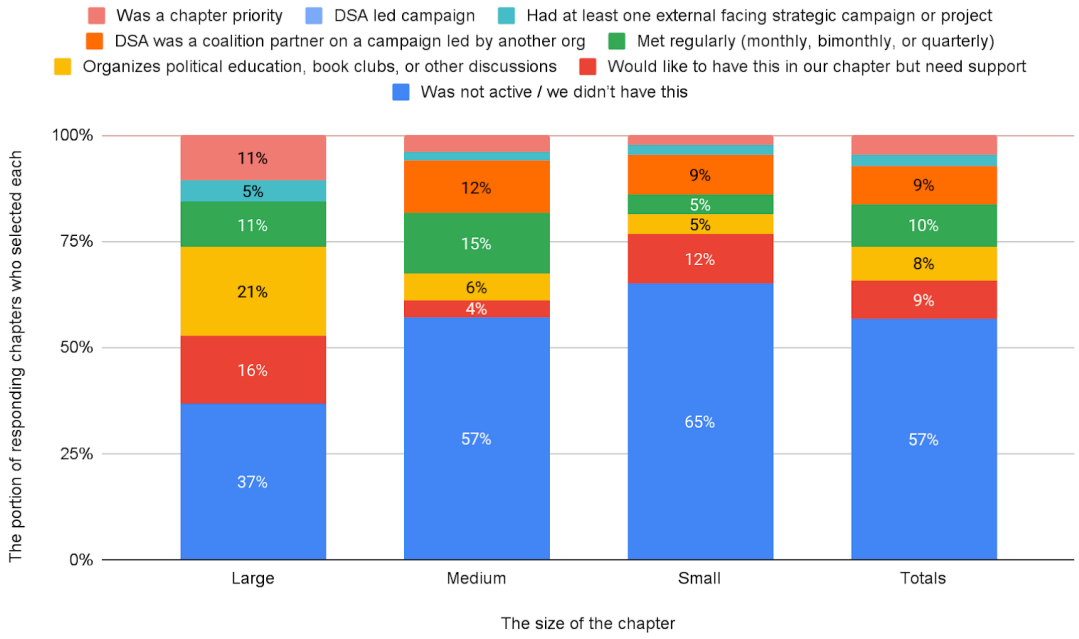
- The vast majority of chapters use mass outreach tactics like email and slack at least monthly, while
- The vast majority of chapters hold general body and committee meetings in a hybrid format with both virtual and in-person attendance. We recommend the GDC play a role in expanding accommodation by working with the Disability Working Group to reach and support chapters looking to continue and build on their current efforts.
- GDC should help train chapters and build capacity in direct outreach methods like phoning (25% of chapters asked for assistance with mass dialers) and in-person 1:1s, the two least commonly used outreach methods

Tech and Security:

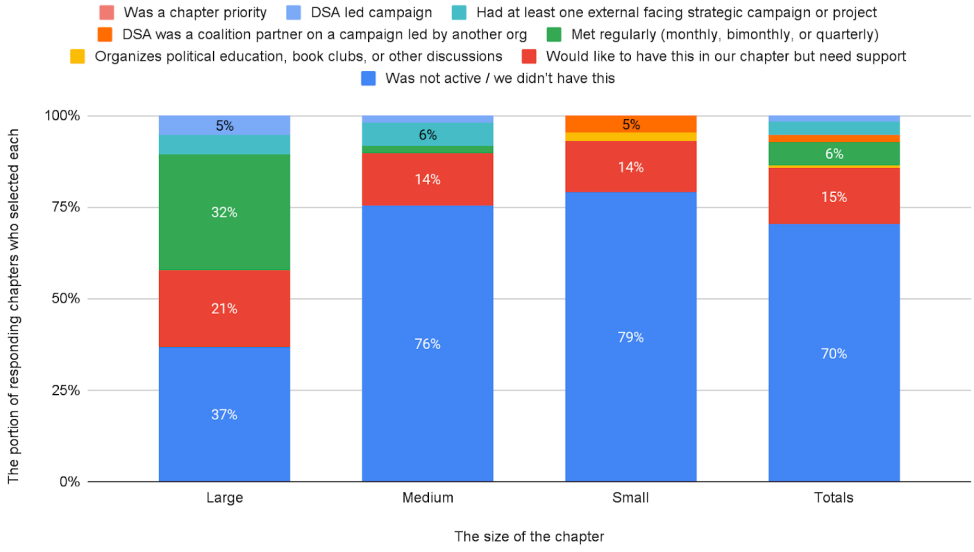
- Nearly half of chapters had no member or working group specifically responsible for chapter technology, and a quarter of chapters asked for assistance with VAN, mass dialers, password managers, and Action Network.
- Basic chapter infrastructure tools like Action Network and websites were very widely used, with more specialized and complex organizing tools being much less common.
- Given the widespread usage of chapter infrastructure and internal organizing tools, we recommend the GDC integrate training on these tools to supplement the required non tech work from having 1:1's to coordinating a team to manage work.

APPENDIX

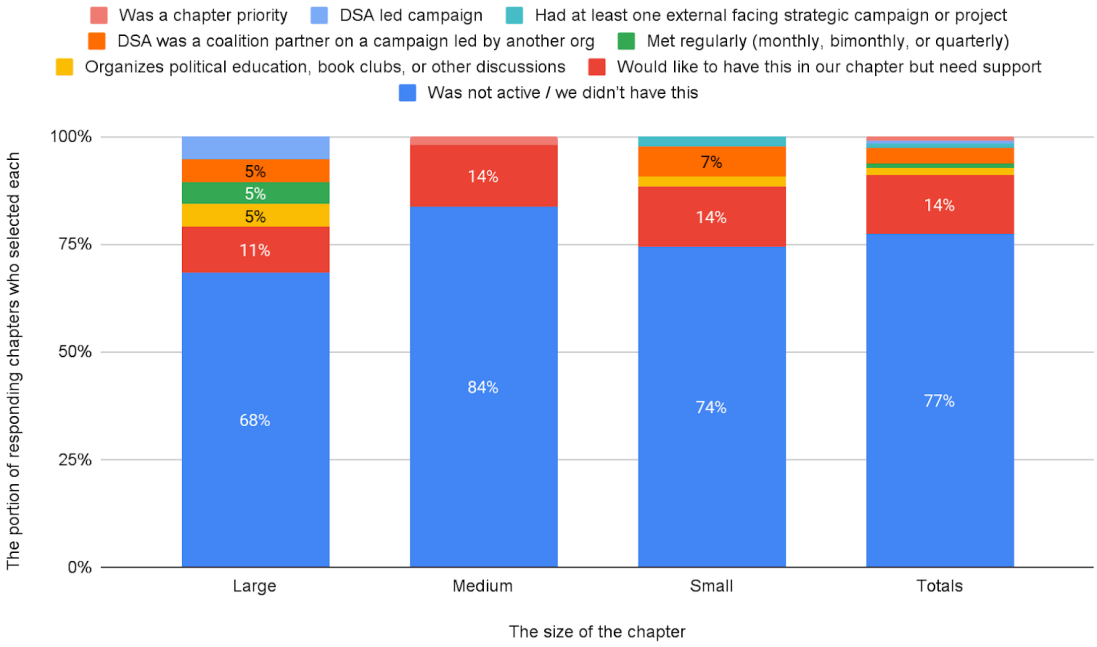
Graph 56. Abolition/Defund Activity of Responding Chapters



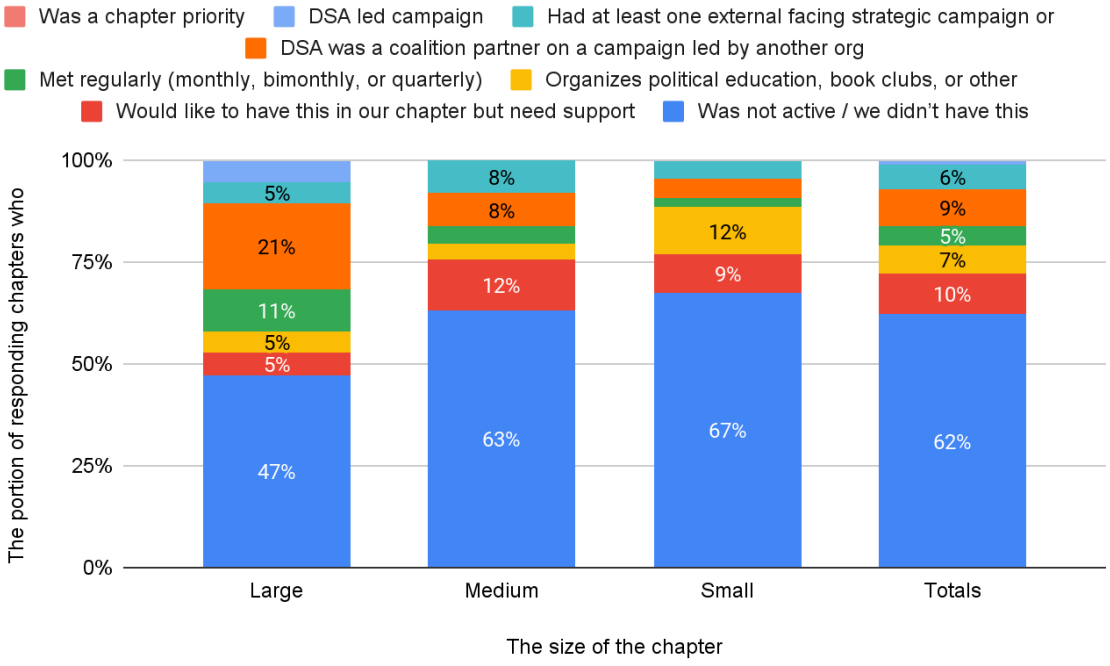
Graph 57. Anti-Fascism/Red Rabbit Activity of Responding Chapters



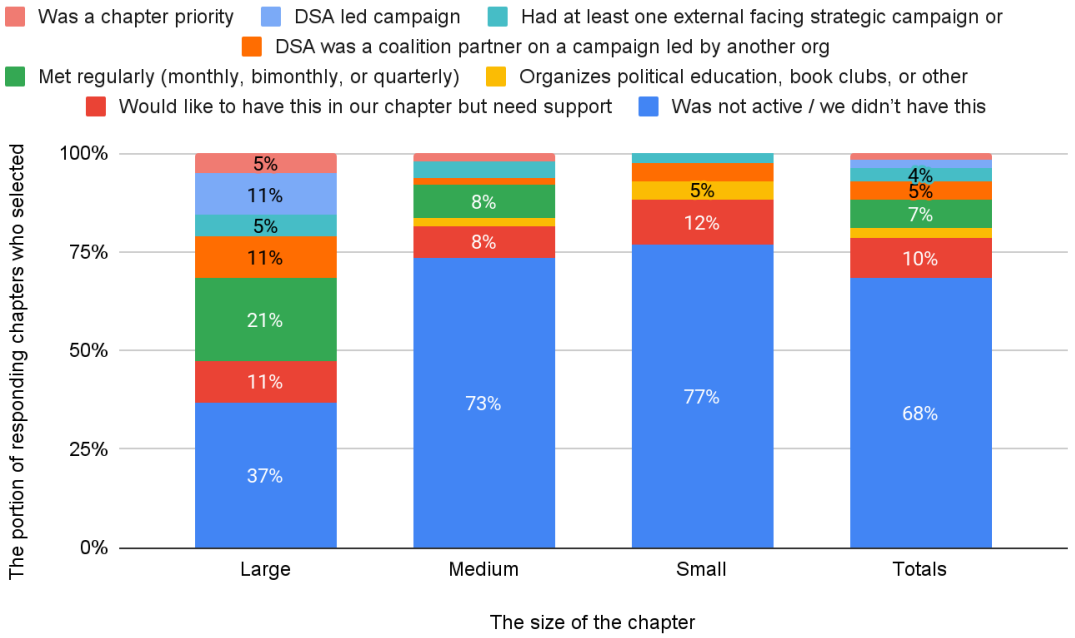
Graph 58. Immigration Activity of Responding Chapters



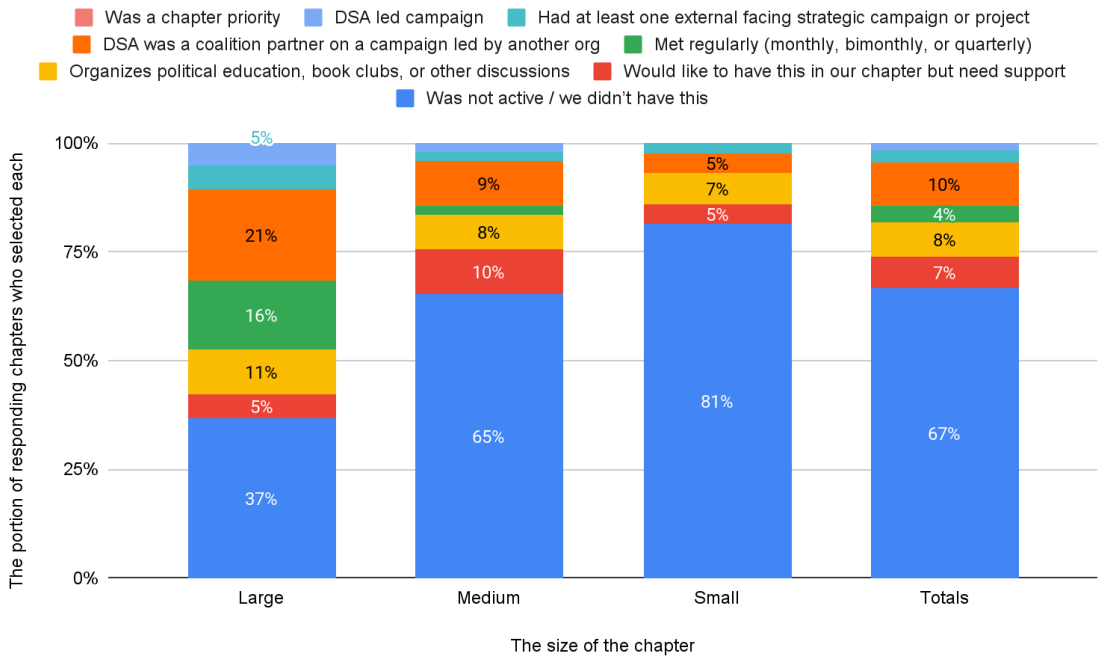
Graph 59. Internationalism Activity of Responding Chapters



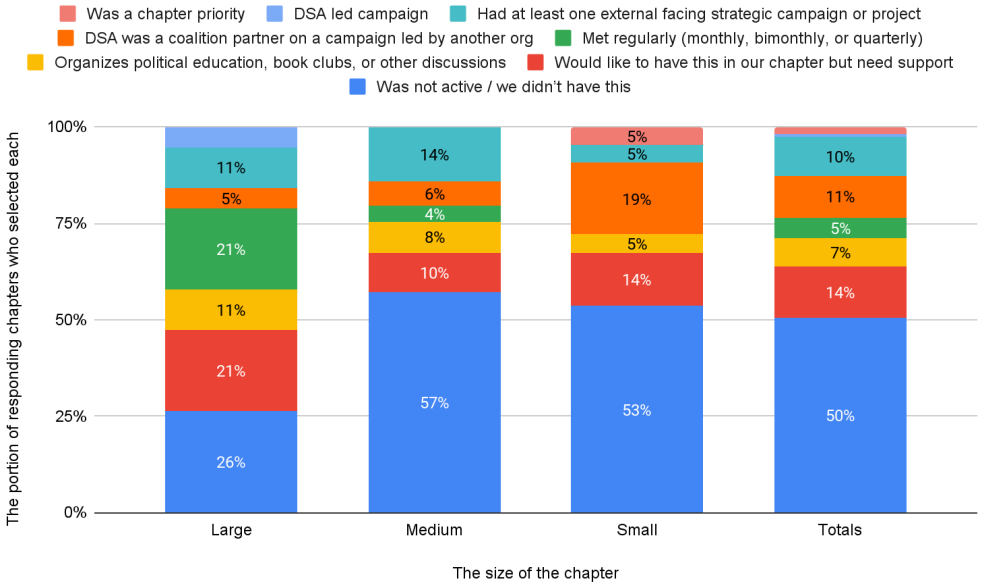
Graph 60. Medicare for All Activity of Responding Chapters



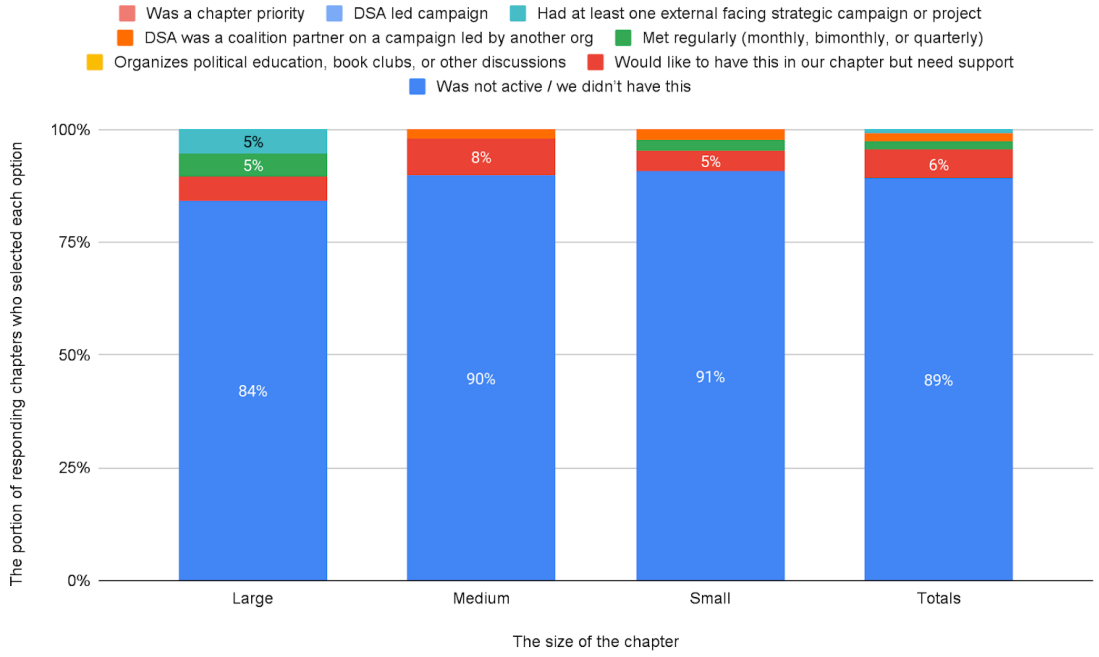
Graph 61. Palestine/BDS Activity of Responding Chapters



Graph 62. Queer/LGBTQIA Socialist Activity of Responding Chapters



Graph 63. Religious Socialist Activity of Responding Chapters



Growth & Development Committee Restructuring Proposal

Rationale
The Growth and Development was formed through 2019 Convention mandates, with the goal of developing the recruitment, retention, training, mentorship, chapter development infrastructure, and socialist analysis necessary to build a mass organization. In the last two years, the GDC has managed to bottomline this work but has been limited by an inflexible and, at times, redundant, structure that does not allow this necessary project the nimbleness and sustainability required.

As a membership-driven and membership-led organization, efforts to support the development of members into skilled organizers and to organize in specific and strategic terrains of struggle are vital to the well-being of a growing organization. Our current infrastructure is from a time when our membership was only around 5,000 members, and now, at more than 95,000, it is crucial that we scale up our work, create and fortify centralized infrastructure for supporting our numerous campaigns and projects, and develop a shared understanding of what it means to be a DSA member that is actively involved in the health of the organization.

The 21-23 NPC voted to approve the 100K Resolution passed at the 2021 Convention as a priority work plan, meaning any time or resources needed to carry out the defined scope of work will take precedence over other internal work.

Proposed Changes
The GDC will be directed and overseen by the GDC Steering Committee (GDC SC), which will take its direction from the National Political Committee. The Steering Committee Structure will consist of 11 members: no less than 4 but no more than 6 NPC members, 4 spots reserved for Training/Mentorship chairs, and the remaining positions will be considered at-large and filled by members of the GDC. Two co-chairs, one of whom is a member of the NPC, will be appointed (approved 6/28). ~~Two NPC members will be appointed as the co-chairs of the GDC by the end of February.~~ All non-NPC members will be appointed by the NPC. The GDC SC is responsible for overseeing, directing, and coordinating GDC-related work and

strategic oversight of the standing and project teams. The GDC SC assigns projects and areas of work to its sub-bodies.

The GDC teams structure will consist of two standing teams and three project teams. The two standing teams will be the Training & Surveys Team and the Mentorship Team. The Training & Surveys Team will be responsible for overseeing and coordinating trainings, supporting national bodies in training efforts, and carrying out the annual chapter and biannual member survey (which will be conducted on Convention years). The Mentorship Team will do the work outlined here. Standing teams maintain recurring and ongoing work and will be populated by DSA members in good standing, vetted and approved by the SC for 1 year appointments. Current members of the GDC will also need to be reapproved by the GDC SC.

Project teams are time-limited groups that bottom-line specific projects. These teams will oversee the Dues Drive, the Recruitment Drive, and New Member Orientations. The GDC SC may choose to create additional project teams as needed.

The GDC SC, on top of overseeing the work of the standing and project teams, will also have regular discussions about open questions related to the work of the GDC. These discussions should lead to tangible guidance, reports, or proposals to be referred to the NPC. The open questions are listed below:

Open Questions

- *What is our collective/organizational definition of "membership?" of "active member?"* How do we encourage members to move into action beyond joining? What are the expectations we have of our members? Are they universal? What should a typical DSA member be expected to do on a regular basis? How does this definition drive the way we "respond" to membership?
- *What is our collective/organizational definition of "engagement"?* How do we measure engagement and how do we create a definition of engagement that allows for different livelihoods, lifestyles, and capacities in member participation?

- *How do we define priority criteria to determine which chapters fit into certain named categories?* Particularly "rural" chapters, and how do we make sure these definitions don't become static (for example defining certain chapters as "small" instead of understanding these chapters are only "small" until they become "big") Similarly, how do we continue define at-large membership in a way that assumes the ultimate destination for any at-large member should be a chapter?
- *How do we improve the new member orientation process and how they are funneled to chapters?*
- *How the MROC resolution applies here, since recruiting and retaining a more diverse membership will only happen with specific, intentional practice change?*
- *How do we build out this work in a way that allows chapters at various levels of development to engage in meaningful ways?* How can we structure trainings and systems for monitoring engagement and retention within chapters in a way that is held by the chapter and not just a few self-selecting members who drive the work (and then take it with them when and if they leave the chapter)?
- *How will this work be standardized across the organization?* Many groups currently hold different pieces of the work that's implicated in this resolution (particularly the DSLC and HJC). How do we assess the current capacity of those various bodies and create a plan that draws on what already exists, while holding a long term goal of standardizing practices and the purpose of trainings across the organization?
- *How do our current mentorship practices push current chapter leaders to engage in national work while simultaneously helping them do leadership development within the chapter to move the local work they hold into new hands?* Relatedly, how do we get an accurate and realistic assessment of our current leadership layer?
- *How do we clarify the relationship between YDSA and DSA?* What body within YDSA is driving member growth and engagement? Is there a YDSA equivalent of DSA's GDC?

2022-2023 Scope of Work

(for the full text, see the 100K priority proposal passed in January 2022 by the NPC)

- Restructuring the GDC
    - Our current subcommittee model is not effective because we end up duplicating work or overlapping on specific projects. There's consensus that restructuring to a more project-oriented model would give us more overall capacity and clarity of work.
- Dues Drive
    - Using the dues drive as a vehicle to get people to not just renew, but recommit to DSA and to building multiracial working class power. We want members to understand the importance and significance of being funded by members dues and the implications for our work. We should be clear that it's not just about renewing your dues but recommitting to the work of building a mass political organization to organize the entire working class.
- Setting up onboarding and new member programs in chapters
    - New member school with a structured curriculum including organizing training and political education
- Creating an at-large member to chapter pipeline.
    - All together at-large members are the third largest chapter in the organization
    - At-large members should have the goal of starting chapters
    - Integrate this process particularly with a member participation arc
        - There should be clear expectations of what a DSA member is and how to participate (at various levels of engagement)
    - By 2023, we should cut existing 2021 at-large membership by ⅓.
- Skills Trainings
    - Need to very clearly link to ongoing campaigns so there are real projects people can work on following trainings
        - i.e. tenant and labor training
            - Need to establish an ongoing collaboration with the HJC and the DSLC to ensure that these trainings complement the work being done in chapters
    - Identify ways to track what trainings are being completed by chapters, members, and national bodies
- YDSA incorporation

    - Strengthening connections between YDSA and DSA chapters so that there's a mutual support system
    - Trainings taking place over summer for students to attend, like a Socialist Summer School
        - Perhaps this could be done in the lead up to the YDSA Fall Drive
- Mentorship program prioritizing south and rural areas with demographic diversity.
- Comprehensive assessment of DSA's demographics and structures
    - Using the 2022 chapter survey and 2023 member survey to get a better understanding of our current membership, how chapters operate, and where we have made progress (comparing to previous iterations) as well as areas of concern